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About this record

The volume, stamped 'Secret' on the front cover and frontispiece, is part 1 (historical and political materials) of a précis of Kuwait (spelt Koweit throughout) affairs for the years 1896-1904. It was prepared by Jerome Antony Saldanha of the Bombay Provincial Civil Service, and published in 1904 by the Government of India Foreign Department, Simla, India.

The volume includes a preface (folio 4), list of contents (folio 5) and list of appendices (folio 6). The sections listed in the contents run as follows:

- I: Brief History of Koweit from circa 1716 to 1896 A.D.;
- II: Murder of Mahomed bin Subah [Muḥammad bin Ṣabāḥ] and his brother Jarrah [Jarrāḥ bin Ṣabāḥ] by Mubarak [Mubārak] and Mubarak's succession, 1896;
- III: (1) Proposed Turkish Quarantine at Koweit, (2) views of the Government of India and India Office;
- IV: Haripasa Piracy case. Warning to Sheikh of Koweit. Question of Protectorate over Koweit raised - 1895-1896;
- V: Threatened attack of Sheikhs Jasim bin Thani [Jāsīm bin Muḥammad Āl Thānī] and Yusuf bin Ibrahim [Yūsuf bin Ibrāhīm] on Koweit. Question of Protectorate over Koweit discussed 1897-98;
- VI: (1) Movements of Turkish troops towards Koweit, (2) Russian intrigues, (3) Question of Protectorate over Koweit further discussed;

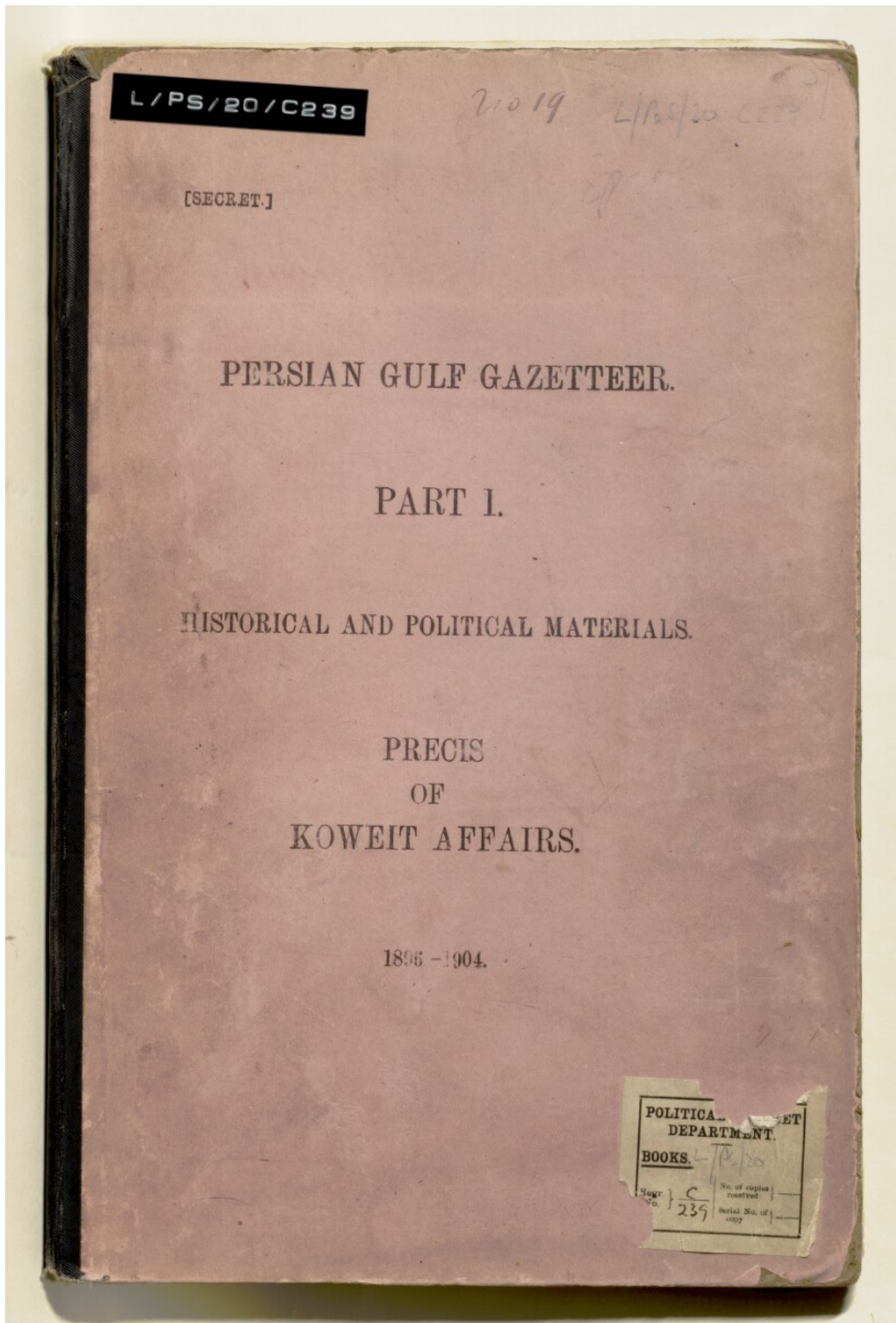
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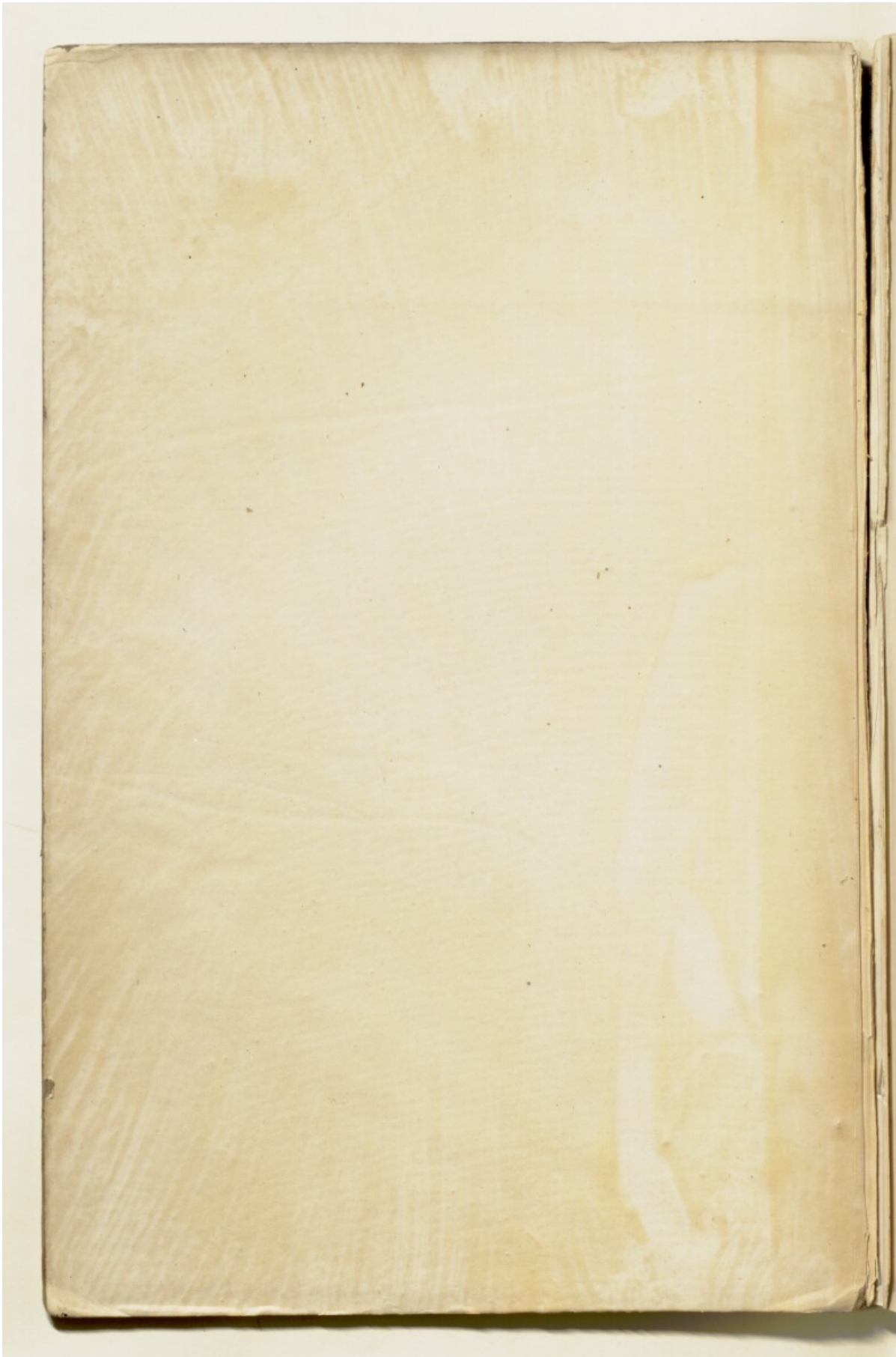
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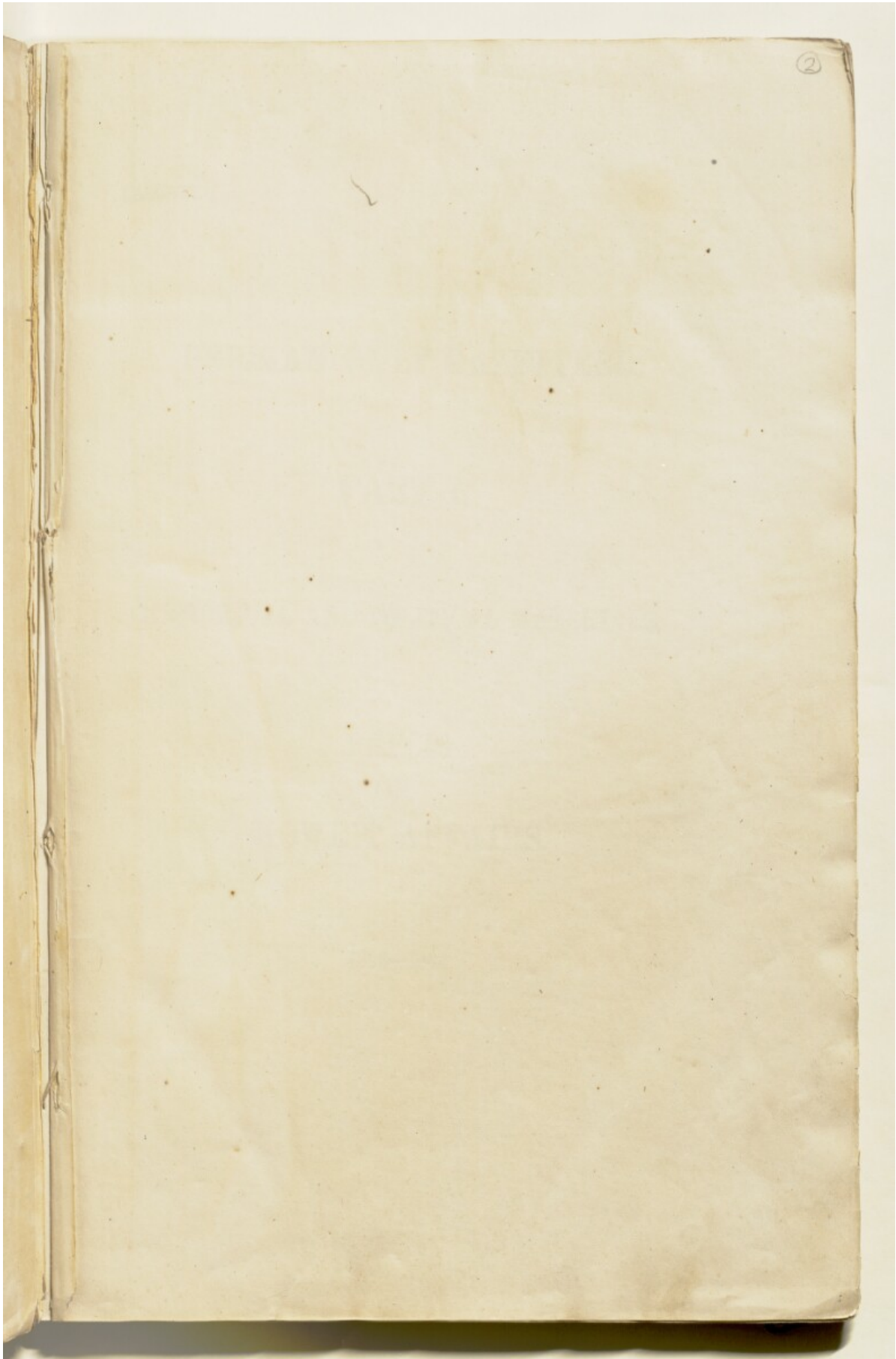
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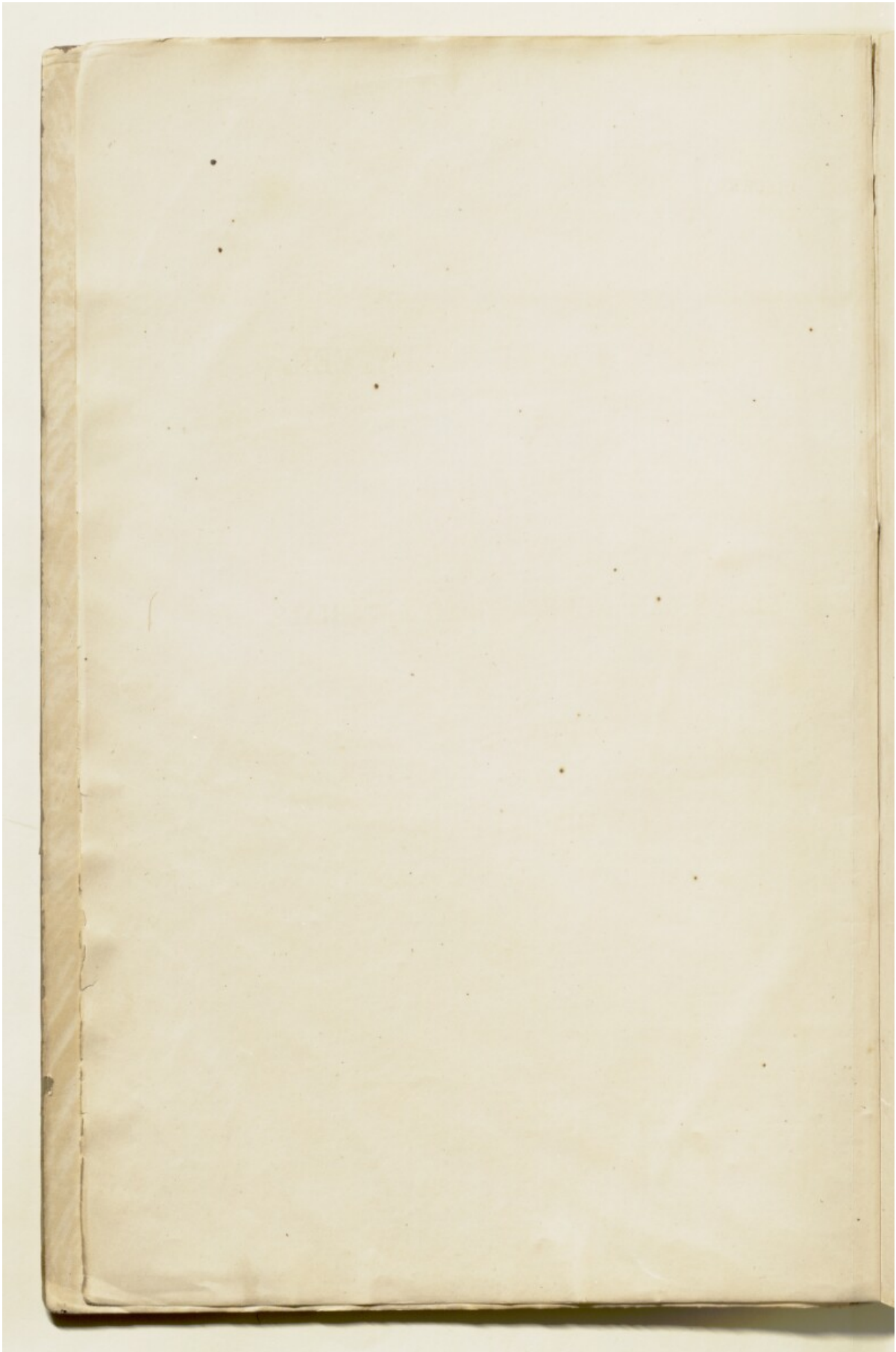
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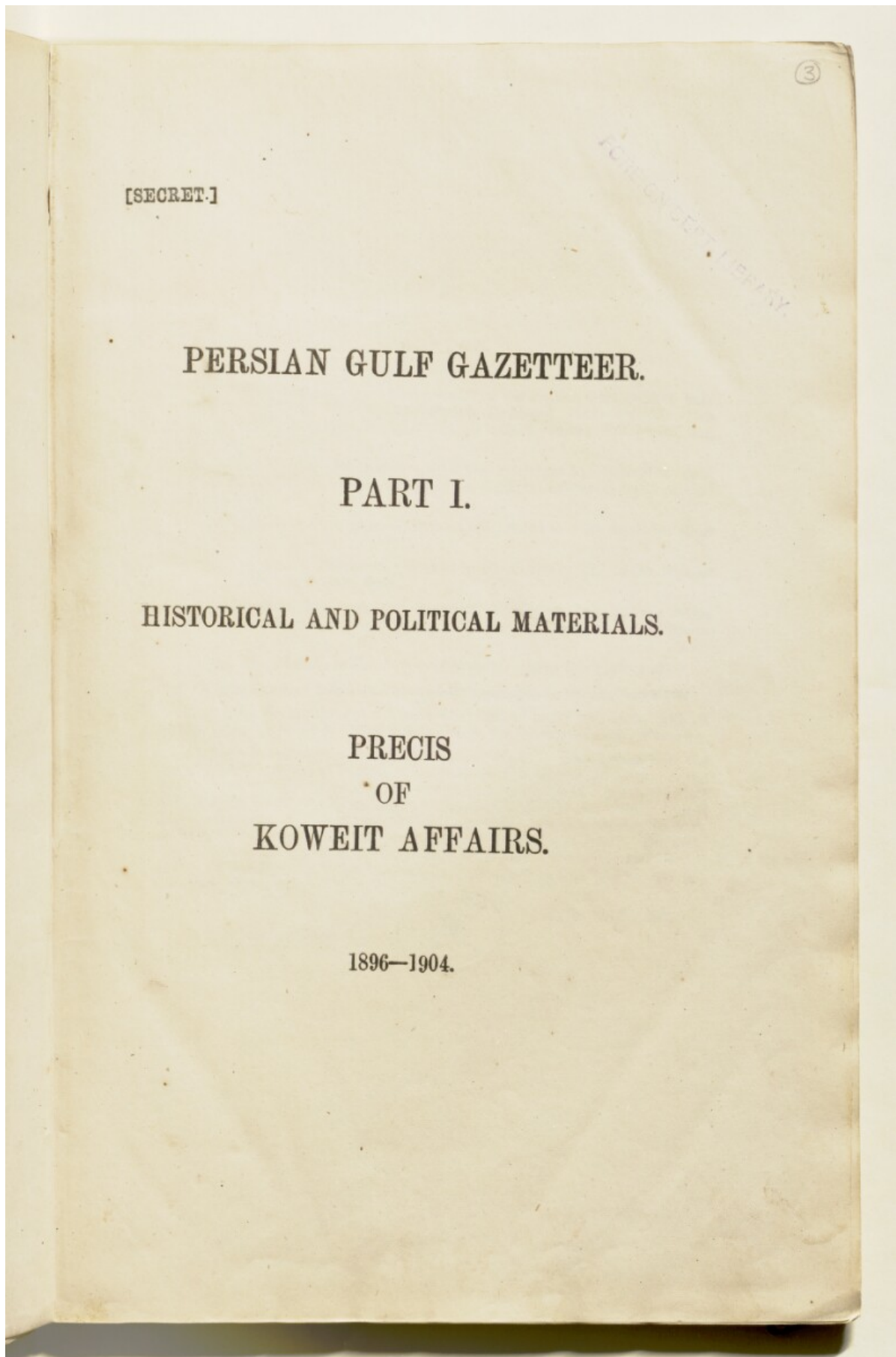
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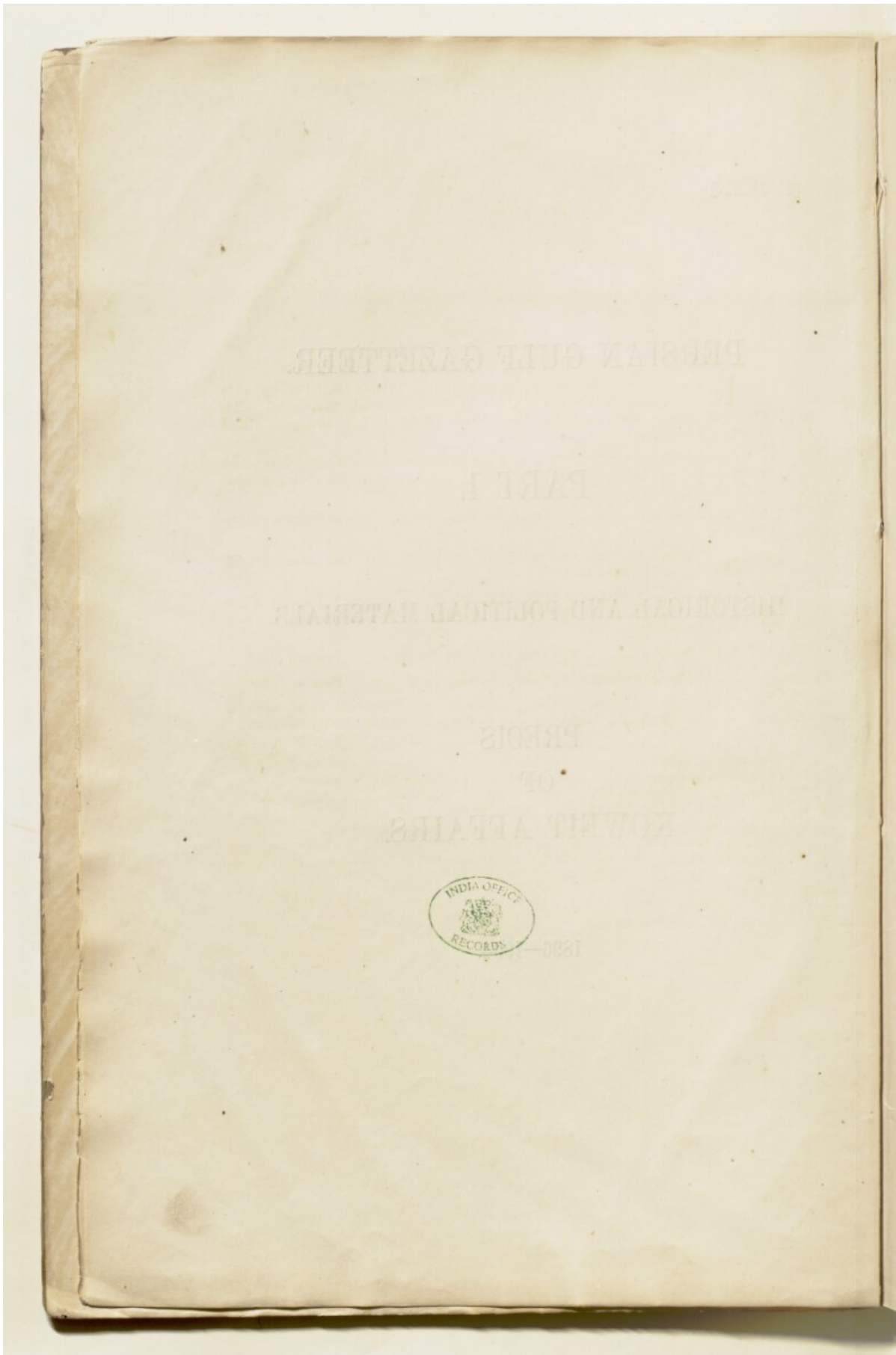














PREFACE.

Koweit has been drawn into the vortex of the Persian Gulf Politics only since 1896, when its late Sheikh Mahomed was murdered. This Précis therefore deals mainly with Koweit affairs during the period that followed that event.

I have collated together, however, all official references to Koweit that could be traced on our records before 1896, a few non-official references being printed in Appendix A.

The following matters affecting Koweit are treated in more detail in other Précis :—

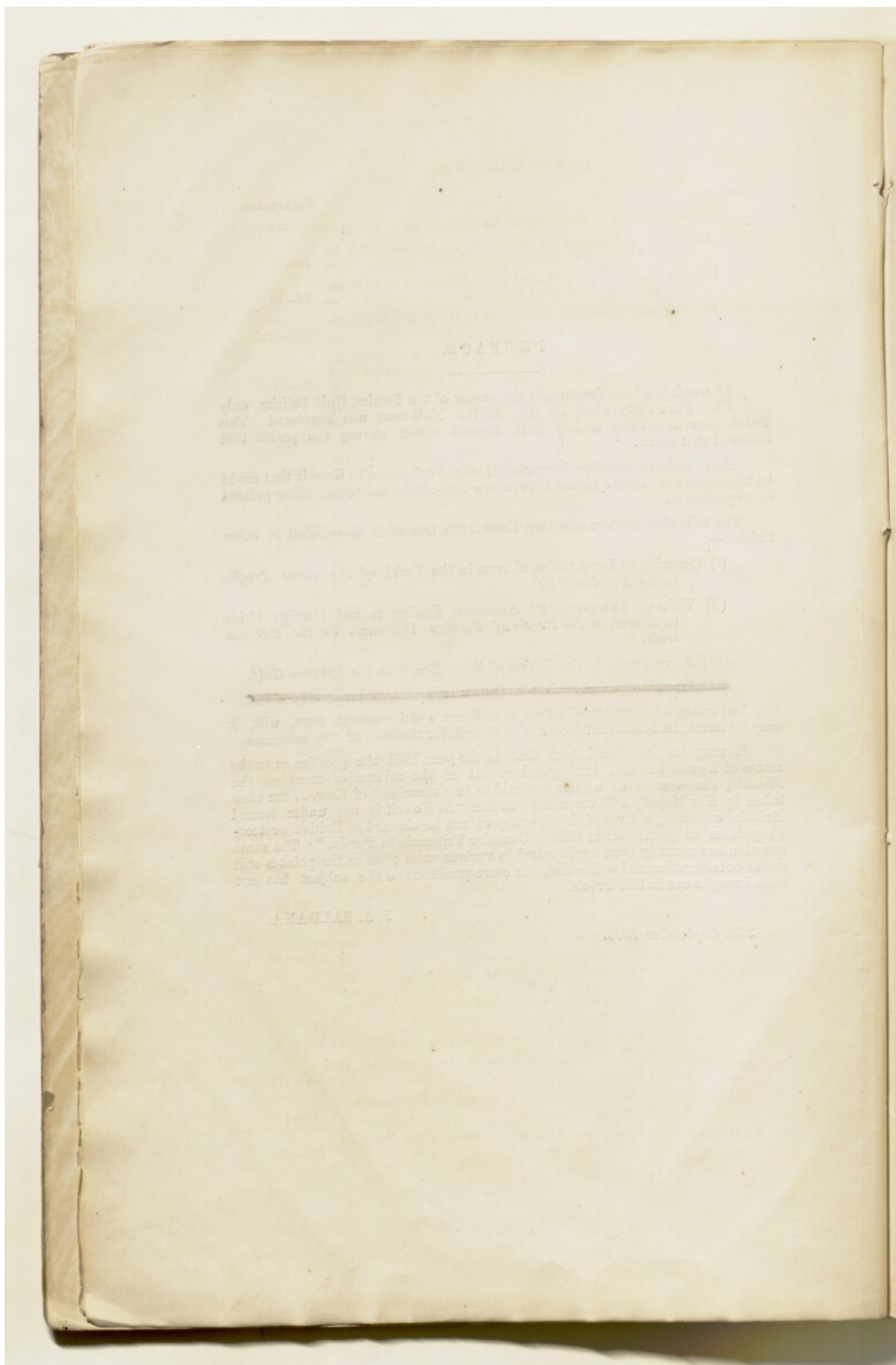
- (i) Question of Importation of arms in the *Précis of the Arms Traffic in the Persian Gulf*.
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- (iii) Slave Traffic in the *Précis of Slave Traffic in the Persian Gulf*.
- ~~(iv) Arms Traffic in the Précis of Arms Traffic in the Persian Gulf.~~

Important declarations of policy or statements of important facts, will, it may be noted, be found italicized in this Précis, for the sake of easy reference.

It may be mentioned here that in the year 1901 the question as to the status of Koweit subjects having arisen out of the seizure of arms on the *Hathur*, the *nacoda* of which was said to be a merchant of Koweit, the view taken by Her Majesty's Government was that "as Koweit is not under formal British protection, natives of that country cannot be claimed as British protected persons or justiciable to British Consular Tribunals in Persia." The same question has recently been again raised in various cases ; but as the point is still under consideration and undecided, the correspondence on the subject has not been brought out in this Précis.

J. A. SALDANA.

25th September 1904.





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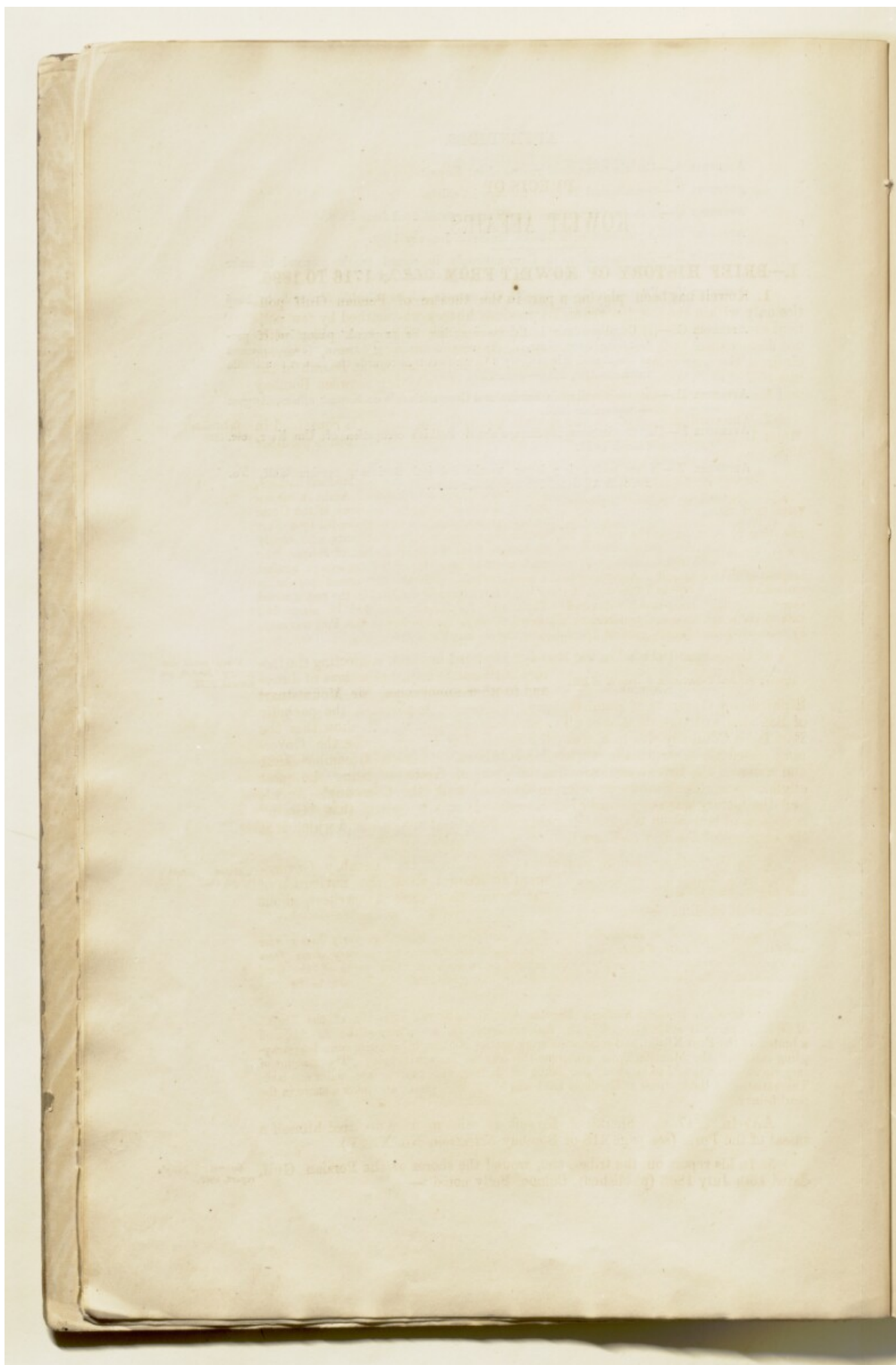
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PRÉCIS OF
KOWEIT AFFAIRS.

I.—BRIEF HISTORY OF KOWEIT FROM CIRCA 1716 TO 1896.

1. Koweit has been playing a part in the theatre of Persian Gulf politics only within the last ten years. Its previous history was marked by few political events, except deaths of its chiefs and successions, which took place without disturbance. It is frequently mentioned under the name of Grane, Gran or Grain in the correspondence connected with the British factory at Basrah in the last half of the 18th century, as a port of call for ships plying between Bombay and Basrah for the trade of Central Arabia.

2. The earliest account in our records descriptive of Koweit is contained in Major Colebrooke's report about the Persian Gulf littoral, dated 10th September 1820 :—

"The first settlement at the head of the Gulf is Koweit situated in a commodious harbour, and inhabited by a mixed race of Arabs in subjection to the *Aula Subbeit*, a branch of the Utubi tribe. It is represented to be defended by a Fort mounting 20 guns, but as the water in the town is insufficient for the inhabitants, who supply themselves from the small Island of *Feliche*, the place must be incapable of defence except against surprise or sudden assault. According to the most probable estimate the armed population amounts to from 5,000 to 7,000 men, of these but a few hundreds are Utubis, the rest a mixed race commercially and peaceably disposed. The Island of *Feliche* is inhabited by about 500 men of the mixed class and protected by a towered *Gharry*. As a survey of this Port was made by order of Government, a general description is unnecessary".

3. In the year 1821, when the Pasha of Baghdad has been subjecting the factory of Basrah to unjust exactions of duties and to other annoyances, Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, found it necessary to threaten the pachalic of Baghdad with an interdict of all commercial intercourse. To show that the East India Company was in earnest, the Resident of Basrah, under the Governor's instructions, struck the British flag at Basrah on 25th December 1821 and removed the British settlement to the island of Grain as being the most eligible spot. The Pasha soon after made peace with the Company's Agents and the factory was re-established at Basrah. It may be noted that 'Grain' is spoken of here as an island. Probably it was the Failaka island which is at the entrance of the Bay of Koweit.

4. In 1829 Major George B. Brucks submitted to the Bombay Government an account about the navigation of the Persian Gulf, and he writes† about the Koweit Sheikhs :—

They acknowledged the authority of the Turks, and pay the tribute of forty bags of rice and four hundred frazils of dates annually. The Sheikh also receives an honorary dress from the Turkish Government yearly.—They have enjoyed peace while all other parts of the Gulf have been embroiled, and to this they owe their maritime greatness. Cattle are to be procured good, but very dear.

From Grane to Khore el Kuffagi, along the Arabian Coast, the authority of the Sheikh of Grane is partially acknowledged by the Bedouin Tribe, who are mostly of the Al Ali, and a branch of the Beni Khalid, and some wandering parties of other tribes; also some few straggling camps of the Montific Tribe, who come this way at certain seasons. The amount of imports to Grane is said to be about five lakhs of dollars, the exports are under one lakh. The variation of the compass at Grane in 1824 was 5° 22' W. Grane also takes a share in the pearl fishery.

4A. In 1847 the Sheikh of Koweit is said to have declared himself a vassal of the Porte (see page 418 of *Bombay Selections* No. XXIV).

5. In his report on the tribes, etc., around the shores of the Persian Gulf, dated 16th July 1863 (published), Colonel Pelly noted :—



"128. The family of the present Sheikh have ruled at Koweit some five generations, or about 250 years; for, as these men live to the good age of 120 years, their generations are, of course, nearly double ours, or about 50 years each. Originally the Sheikh's progenitors dwelt in a small fort, called Mumgussur, situated at the head of the Khore Abdollah, near Bunder Zobair; they were the pirates of the north of the Persian Gulf and lower channels of the Shat-el-Arab; but about 250 years ago the Busrah authorities attacked and expelled them. The original Sheikh then came down the Bubiyan creek with his followers, and debouched on the bay, at present known as that of Koweit or Grane. Crossing the bay, he settled on its southern shore and there erected a Fort or Khote; hence the name Khote, or Koweit. The term Grane is rather applied to the shore line of the entire bay, from its resemblance to the curve formed by two horns, Keor or Ghern, meaning horn. The settlement was subsequently increased by the son of the founder, who erected the longer portion of the present walls which, however, have since been again extended along the shore line as the increase of population from time to time demanded.

* * * * *

133. No doubt, much of the prosperity of Koweit may be due to position and to the comparatively healthy climate: it was in ancient days the point where the sea trade took to caravans or river carriage; it still maintains its natural advantages, and, although I would not recommend the artificial forcing of trade from its present course, *I will still keep an eye on Koweit for future purposes. It is, in my opinion, by no means impossible that Koweit, under the effective development of the Gulf trade, would become the terminus for our sea going steamers, a Coal Station, and a Telegraph Station.* The more you analyse the question, the more will you be probably struck by the fact that the trade of the East and West has a marked tendency to resume its old lines under improved means of transit. Koweit appears to me a preferable port to Basrah for the same reasons that Karachi is preferable to Tatta. The climate of Busrah is fatal, that of Koweit comparatively good. The water of Koweit, it is true, is brackish, yet fever is unknown. Dysentery and ophthalmia are rare; and when men commence begetting new families at 80 and die at 120, the climate cannot be considered as prematurely exhausting.

* * * * *

135. Koweit has a fine broad channel of creek water running from its bay up to within twelve miles of the Busrah point of the river. I landed close alongside the Zobair Bunder, in four fathoms, and this was the least water I found in a midchannel of an average width of one mile from the Koweit and of the creek up to its head, within sight of the date trees on the Shat-el-Arab near Busrah. The cutting of a broad canal across these twelve miles of flat soil would be a work of little cost and labour."

* * * * *

141. The Sheikh said that his family had always been tributary to Turkey; but I learned from another source that, during some years, they had hoisted their own flag; they found, however, that the customs levied on their exports to Bombay were more inconvenient when levied against an unrecognised flag than when levied against a Turkish craft. Koweit shuddering from this foreign pressure, turned to her Sultan and suddenly changed color. Truly, trade is sensitive as woman's modesty.

142. Be the suzerainty of the sublime Porte, however, of old or recent date, it is merely nominal; the Arabs acknowledge the Turks, as we do the 39 Articles, which all accept and none remember.

Colonel Pelly's report, 1868.

6. In his published report No. 57, dated 15th May 1866, relating to his journey to Riyadh, Colonel Pelly wrote as follows about Koweit:—

"18. It may not be uninteresting in this place to submit a few remarks on the bay of Koweit—the sacred bay of the ancients, on whose shores stood Giranbensis. The word Grane is said to be derived from Genern, a horn, which the bay is said to resemble in shape. The present Koweit, from Koot, a fort, may be about a hundred years old. *Originally the Sheikhs of Koweit occupied a fort called Mongassor, on the Zobair Creek a little to the northward.* They were the pirates at the entrance of the Shat-el-Arab; but being attacked by the Turks they sailed south, and pitching at their present position, fortified it on the island side against the attacks of the Bedouins. *The tract around for a radius of about 8 or 10 miles is considered to belong to them* but it is, with the exception of two or three forts and their surrounding irrigation, entirely unproductive; the water of Koweit itself is brackish. Nevertheless, Koweit is one of the most thriving ports in the Persian Gulf. Its craft are large and numerous, trading with India and the Arabian Coasts. Its sailors are reputed the best in these regions. Its trade is considerable; importing rice from Shushter, Busrah, and the Malabar Coast; corn from the Persian Coast, dates from Busrah; and timber for ship building from the west Coast of India. On the land side it barter with the Bedouins who during the winter and spring, bring down "rowghan," wool, and horses; exchanging these for coffee, rice and other necessities. The Bedouins have free access to the town on condition only of leaving their arms at the gate, where the Chief Sheikh and the Kadbees sit daily to hear the news, superintend trade, and administer justice. A large dinner is prepared daily in an allotted hall for the entertainment of strangers. The currency at Koweit is in Maria Theresa dollars, Persian krans, and Turkish copper coin. English sovereigns are occasionally to be found. Bills can be obtained on Busrah, Bushire, Bombay, and the Wahabi capital



The inhabitants, Jews included, enjoy complete religious toleration. No taxes or duties are levied. Those who can afford it, make the Chief Sheikh an annual present. There seems indeed to be little Government interference of any kind, and little need for any.

The Koweits have a considerable carrying trade, and are perhaps the best boat builders round the Gulf.

20. There is a tradition at Koweit that an artificial canal once passed from the Euphrates down through the littoral district of Adan towards Katif. I could not find that there were any traces of this canal at the present day, but on a former occasion having sailed to the head of the Zobair creek, to a point about 10 miles distant from Basrah, I found there was a small canoe channel which connected that creek with the Basrah rivers; and I may mention in this place that it seemed to me that the *Khor Abdullah* leading up in to the *Zobair creek* might possibly hereafter be preferred by sea-going steamers to the present channels leading up to Basrah. The entrance of *Khor Abdullah* is wide and sufficiently deep. I anchored at the head of the *Zobair creek*, close alongside the bank, in four fathoms of water. *From the head of the Zobair creek, a railway might reach the Mediterranean in a direct line of some 800 miles.* The Arabs assured me that there were two direct lines to the westward of the Euphrates, one passing mainly through the desert, and the other touching at townships. It is possible that these lines may be surveyed some day."

7. The portions of Colonel Pelly's reports italicized especially those regarding *Khor Abdullah* are of peculiar interest in these days. That Colonel Pelly regarded the head of the *Khor Abdullah* as an alternative terminus to Koweit of a Railway from the Mediterranean—was apparently overlooked when the British Government secured a control over Koweit and our officers stopped there without looking beyond the horizon of Koweit. The Germans had evidently made a more careful note of Colonel Pelly's references to *Khor Abdullah*.

8. In April 1866—the British Agent at Basrah (Mr. W. P. Johnstone) addressed the following letter (No. 27, dated 4th April 1866), about a case in which the Chief of Koweit was involved with the Turkish authorities, and the details of which throw some side light on his position in relation to the Turks:—

"I have the honour to lay before you a few particulars of a case about which you will, doubtless, hear more anon.

The Kaim Mukam wrote to Sheikh Subah of Koweit, some months ago, to expel from his lands at Fao all the Fellahs who had immigrated from Persian territory, and called upon him to give up possession of an island outlying Duasir, called Safiyeh, which has been for 50 years in possession of the Subah family, but now claimed by the Zeheyr.

Sheikh Subah wrote in reply that it was then winter and very cold, but when the weather moderated, he would send his son, Abdullah, to Bussorah.

The Kaim Mukam then took possession of the island of Safiyeh, placed a certain Moola Enim in charge of it, and dismissed Sheikh Subah's cultivators.

When I saw Sheikh Subah at Koweit a fortnight ago, he told me he had sent his son, Abdullah, to Bussorah, and that he would go to Bagdad if the island question was mooted.

Abdullah-es-Subah arrived here about a month back, and waited patiently for the Kaim Mukam's return. It was the day after Suliman Beg's arrival that Abdullah went to the serai, and after some parley, in which he declared that his father, Subah, had not authorized him to take any steps in the land question, but only to learn and execute the Kaim Mukam's wishes with regard to the Fellahs at Fao, he was peremptorily ordered to pay over to the Zeheyr family the equivalent of all that had been received from the island in question for the last seven years, viz., since Sheikh Jaber-es-Subah's death, on the plea that he had received the produce. On his stating that he had received it only in his capacity of Agent for his father, to whom he regularly handed it over on his return to Koweit, the Kathi and Mufti, who were conveniently present, were appealed to, and ruled that the actual recipient of the produce, whether in the character Principal or Agent, was responsible to the owner of the land for all the receipts. The Tifeekchibashi was thereupon ordered to take charge of Abdullah-es-Subah's person until the Zeheyr's claims for seven year's revenue of the island were satisfied. Salem ibn Beder, an influential merchant of this place and a native of Koweit, then offered to stand security for Abdullah's person, by which he escaped the indignity of being thrown into jail. He was ordered, however, to write at once to Sheikh Subah for powers to represent him in the suit, and has been allowed 15 days either to commence proceedings or to satisfy the demands of the Zeheyr.

Abdullah-es-Subah told me that his father had especially instructed him not to consent to have the case tried in Bussorah, as he considered it had been prejudged by the Kaim Mukam



taking possession of the property, and believed the local influence of the Zeheyr would carry their case against any evidence that might be brought forward on their side.

From what I can glean from both sides, the case appears to be this:—Thirty years ago, when the Turks and Montefigs joined together to reduce and plunder Zobeir, the wealth and prosperity of which had excited their cupidity, Sheikh Jaber-es-Subah of Koweit was called upon by the Turks to prevent any supplies getting to Zobeir by water. He did this effectually; the place was starved out, and had to surrender. Many of the Zeheyr and the wealthier merchants of Zobeir were murdered in cold blood, but amongst those who escaped was a certain Yakub Zeheyr, who fled to Koweit and enjoyed Sheikh Jaber es-Subah's protection. Abdullah-es-Subah states that while at Koweit Yakub Zeheyr sold the Safiyeh island, on his own account and on that of the other proprietors, to Jaber-es-Subah for the sum of 12,000 shamies, and that since that time it has absolutely belonged to them, and their right to it has never been questioned. They possess title deeds drawn up at Koweit.

Yakub-es-Zeheyr, it appears, died at Bussorah a year or two after his return from Koweit. The Zeheyr maintain that Yakub had only a share in the property, and that, if he really did sell it, he had no right to do so. They state that they obtained a Bayaruidi in 1253 from the Ali Pasha ordering Jaber to give up the land; but that, as he was strong enough to resist the Turks, he took no heed of the order. That though their title deeds were lost in the sack of Zobeir, copies of them, proving that five-eighths of the Island of Safiyeh belong to them, exist in the Bussorah Sijjil. That they are prepared to prove by documentary evidence how they have guarded against possession of fifteen years, constituting a title to Jaber's ownership, by constantly ventilating their claim by appeals to the Turks, who would have enforced their rights had their Government been strong enough. That independently of this their law does not hold possession of any number of years to constitute a title if claimants are infants or absentees, and give their reason for bringing forward the claim now to be that the claimants have grown up, and most of them (about 60 in number) are now at or near the place. I have seen Ali Pasha's Bayaruidi, but as it is in the possession of the Zeheyr, I imagine it could never have been presented to Sheikh Jaber. Without going into the merits, of the case, the rights of which seem very doubtful, I think the high-handed one-sided measure taken by Suliman Beg and his evident desire to bias and prejudice it in favour of the Zeheyr the advantage which has been taken by the Kaim Mukam of this unseasonable opportunity to resuscitate old unproven claims of many years' standing against the Koweit people for their real or supposed appropriation of wrecked property, combined with the marked invility experienced by Abdullah-es-Subah and other Koweit men in the streets and bazars since Abdullah's detention at the serai, cannot fail to have the effect of making the Koweit people retaliate when opportunity offers.

Were it the object of Government to incite and foment the old prejudices and animosities of the Zobeir and Koweit people, and to lead them on to a quarrel which would probably end in the devastation of two flourishing little towns, they could not devise better means of commencing it than those taken by Suliman Beg. It may be the policy of the Turks to weaken and subjugate these places, but I think it would be a short-sighted one, for, if it succeed, I do not see that any advantage will accrue to the Government generally, though it might enrich individuals. The end of such a quarrel must be that Koweit, if successful, would be more independent than ever, and might give trouble, which it cannot be accused of doing now; and if it failed, the Turks would lose a flourishing little free port, whose existence without adding directly is of considerable advantage indirectly to the revenue, for it is my firm conviction that, rather than submit to a Turkish Government at Koweit, the people to a man would abandon the place.

Trifling as the case in point may appear, the rough and off-hand manner in which it has been handled is regarded by the Koweit people as a wish to bring them and the Zeberies into collision; and strangely enough, though both sides have the experience of Turkish policy in former years before them, they are perfectly ready to commence to victimise one another on the slightest encouragement or provocation. If Suliman Beg is not acting directly by the Pasha's orders, I think His Excellency would be well advised to remove the trial of the case away from a place where so much partiality has been evinced from the outset.

I may mention incidentally that Abdullah-es-Subah entreated me the other day not to allow the Mail Steamer *Euphrates* to visit Koweit on her return from Bussorah, as he believed the 35 bales she had on board for Koweit would, in Suliman Beg's report to the Pasha, be converted into a vast number, in order to show how much Koweit took away from the revenue of Bussorah. The *Penang* Mail Steamer visited Koweit in the middle of last month, and landed about 100 bales there; since then Suliman Beg has been making enquiries in all directions, and wrote to Koweit specially to be informed what she was doing there. As Suliman Beg has seen me twice, and as he knows I was on board the *Penang*, I think he would, if he wanted correct information, have applied to me. His not having done so, however, looks as if he was seeking material for an exaggerated report. As the Mail Company engaged to land the *Euphrates's* bales at Bussorah or Koweit at the option of the Captain, I complied with Abdullah-es-Subah's request and caused the bales to be landed here. The *Euphrates*, therefore, did not visit Koweit.



9. In submitting this report Colonel Kemball in his letter No. 15 dated 18th April 1866, observed:—

"The matter therein mentioned indicated incidentally the policy which Namik Pasha seems disposed to initiate in regard to Koweit, which policy, on the arrival of the two steam Corvettes lately detached from Constantinople for service in the Persian Gulf, he will probably endeavour to extend to other ports on the Arabian Coast.

Koweit is a free port of considerable importance; its Chief acknowledges fealty to the Sultan, and its numerous vessels carry the Ottoman Flag, but the inhabitants (who are exclusively Arab) pay neither tax nor tribute to the Turkish Treasury. The actual relation of the Sheikh of Koweit to the Porte is similar with that of the Sheikhs of the greater Bedouin tribes, who receive monthly allowances respectively from Baghdad, Mosul, Orfa, Aleppo, and Damascus, in consideration of their maintaining the security of the roads, or, more properly speaking, of their abstaining from pillaging the settled districts bordering on the desert. His feudal obligation, if I may use the term, is to protect the shores of the Shat-el-Arab from Foreign attack by sea, for which service, a service that ceased to be real when the British Government undertook the Police of the Persian Gulf, he continues to receive an annual quota of dates from the government of Bussorah."

10. In his despatch dated 16th May 1866, Colonel Kemball (Cousul General at Baghdad) further reported:—

"Referring to the enclosure to my despatch No. 15 of 18th ultimo, I take this opportunity to mention that Abdullah el Subah, the son of the Chief of Koweit, having come it person to Baghdad to defend his cause against the Zeheyr family of Zobair, and having succeeded in this object, also returned to Bussorah per steamer on the 3rd instant. On discussing the matter with me His Excellency expressed his conviction that the right lay on the Koweit side. This conviction, I apprehend, may have been quickened by the knowledge that, did Abdullah es Subah fail, his father was prepared to maintain his suit by force against Zobair, to which end he was assured of the countenance and armed support of Amir Abdullah, the Wahabi Ruler."

11. The following report of Colonel Kemball (No. 56, dated 26th June 1866) in regard to the opposition of the Sheikh of Koweit to make Koweit a port of call for British Indian Steam Navigation Company's Steamers for fear of the Turks, is very interesting.

"Adverting to the peculiar position politically considered of the Sheikhs and people of Koweit as set forth in former despatches and to the suspicions and apprehensions which recent events in the Persian Gulf have excited in the mind of Namik Pasha, I venture to submit to His Excellency the Hon'ble the Governor in Council, the expediency of inviting the British Indian Steam Navigation Company, to suspend for a while the visits of its vessels to that Port.

I am aware that as a matter of right neither could the Turkish authorities object to the extension of Commercial intercourse by British vessels to any point within the limits of Ottoman territory, nor could the Arab community of Koweit decline such intercourse. Yet both parties, and more especially the latter, though sincerely desirous of maintaining the most friendly relations with the English, are by the force of circumstances rendered averse from this arrangement, and it is accordingly on the interests of the company that I would recommend it to forego temporarily its undoubted privilege.

Unlike Bahrain, Koweit has ever avowed the suzerainty of the Porte and has ever been recognised to be a Turkish dependency; but in the very weakness of the Suzerain originated a policy in its part, which, while affording the surest guarantee of virtual independence relieved the Feudatory from contracting engagements to other foreign powers.—This policy has hitherto been justified by the character and conduct of the dominant family. Their Port being free, their commercial relations have involved no responsibilities and, strong enough to cause their rights to be respected by neighbouring cognate Principalities, they have uniformly avoided any cause of umbrage or offence to the Government which now for nearly half a century has exercised paramount authority in the Persian Gulf: I am unable to call to mind a single instance of maritime irregularity committed by the inhabitants of Koweit during that period and even in the matter of the Slave trade wherein their obligations were equivocal the remonstrances of English functionaries have always been received by them with deference and ostensibly at least have not remained without effect.

But recent events by attracting the attention of the Turkish authorities to Arabia have seriously compromised the prescriptive freedom of Koweit, and if the measures now under contemplation should be prosecuted to extremity as the advent of Turkish Corvettes to the Gulf would pretend may not improbably issue in the dissolution of the flourishing Community Under such circumstances it is not perhaps surprising that the Sheikh of Koweit by the mouth of his son, then on a visit at Bussorah, should have entreated Mr. Johnston, the British Agent there, to dissuade the Commanders of Mail Steamers from touching at his Port, so long as



Namik Pasha should govern Turkish Arabia nor would it perhaps be surprising, were his entreaties disregarded, his political status being threatened that his barbarian instincts should prompt him to a course of opposition which must either force on the apprehended event or bring him into collision with His Majesty's Government in India.

The communication by sea between Koweit and Bussorah being constant and frequent and by land not exceeding 3 days caravan journey I am inclined to believe that no great sacrifice is involved in the temporary concession of its right by the British Indian Steam Navigation Company.

I have no reason that the objections of the Sheikh of Koweit are dictated by mistrust on his part of the designs of the English. I attach indeed no credit whatever to the proposals submitted to the Resident in the Persian Gulf by one Abu Isan as reported in Colonel Pelly's despatch to your address No. 60 dated 15th May 1866. This man is not even a native of Koweit with whose Chiefs he enjoys no more intimate relations than derive from his office of Conductor of Pilgrims and judging of the character of the individual from his class as it is found in Turkish Arabia. Active and energetic but thoroughly unprincipled, judging also from the circumstances of his visit to Bushire I am of opinion that his mission, unaccredited it was in respect to Koweit, was self-arrogated, and his object merely to acquire the merit of discovering designs of which he argued the existence from the assumed importance of his connection with Mr. Palgrave.

Mr. Johnston informs me that since Abdul Aziz's mission to Baghdad Abdollah ee Sand has shown himself very watchful of the course of affairs at Koweit, where an Agent on his part resides.

*Koweit join Turks
in conquering Hass,
1871.*

12. In 1871, when Midhat Pasha made a successful attempt to reduce the Amir of Nejd to subjection, the Sheikh of Koweit declared himself on the Turkish side, assumed the Turkish flag, and was instrumental in inducing other Chiefs on the Arabian littoral of the Persian Gulf to imitate his example. For his action he received the title of Pasha, and was granted considerable tracts of land in the neighbourhood of Fao. It would appear that about that time a Turkish Custom House was established at Koweit, but it must have been maintained for a short time only.

Lieutenant Prideaux's report 1876.

13. In 1876 Lieutenant-Colonel Prideaux, the Acting Resident at Bushire, enumerated as the principal Turkish ports on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf, Koweit, Katif, and Ojair. In May 1878 the Government of India proposed "that from Busrah to Ojair" (which is situated on the coast considerably to the south of Koweit) "the authority of the Porte should be recognised as established on land, but that at sea the British Government should continue to exercise some concurrent Protectorate, pursuing pirates if necessary, into Turkish waters and dealing with them wherever found, whether at sea or on shore, within certain limits through the Resident in the Gulf." This proposal was discussed by the Foreign Office and somewhat modified.

*Lord Salisbury's,
Despatch of 1879.*

14. In a despatch, dated the 5th January 1879, Lord Salisbury authorised Sir A. Layard, then British Ambassador at Constantinople, to propose to the Porte an arrangement by which British ships of war should be instructed to pursue their operations for the repression of piracy, as far as possible, outside the territorial waters of the Arabian mainland north of Odeid, but also should have authority to pursue and capture piratical vessels within the 3 miles limit on that part of the coast, wherever this might seem indispensable to the attainment of their object. This arrangement, which would by implication have admitted Turkish territorial sovereignty as far south as Odeid (which is south of Ojair), was mentioned by Sir A. Layard to the Turkish Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs, and submitted by them to the Council of Ministers, but got no further.

*Instructions to Sir
W. White, 1888.*

15. In August 1888, in consequence of a report that the Turkish Government contemplated an attack on Oman, Sir W. White was instructed that Her Majesty's Government recognised Turkish jurisdiction on the coast as far as Katif and were anxious that it should be effectively exercised within those limits. Beyond that point Her Majesty's Government considered the chiefs to be independent. (Katif, though situated to the north of Ojair and Odeid, is still considerably south of Koweit).

16. Sir W. White in reply called attention to some recent practical assertions of Turkish jurisdiction south of Katif, and represented that it would be difficult to lay down that Katif was the hard and fast limit beyond which

* The question of the Turkish sphere of influence in the Arabian littoral is fully treated in the *Katar Précis*, 1873-1904.



Turkish influence should not extend. He did not, therefore, make any statement on this point in his communication to the Porte protesting against any aggression on Oman.

17. In April 1893, Sir C. Ford stated officially to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that Her Majesty's Government admitted Turkish sovereignty from Basrah to Katif.

18. The Sheikhs of Koweit belong to the Sabah family of the Uttubi Arabs. Rahimbaright appears to have been the first of the family who settled in Koweit. That was about the middle of the 17th century probably,—if Colonel Pelly is right in the date assigned to the settlement. But from Major Bruck's report referred to above, paragraph 4, it does not appear to have been before 1716 A.D. It was the brother of the first settler by name *Sabah*, who fortified the town and laid the foundation of the present principality. He was succeeded about 1762, by his son Abdullah, who ruled for over 50 years, and made Koweit one of the most prosperous sea-ports in the Persian Gulf. By his firm and tactful Government, he saved Koweit from external attacks and internal troubles. Jaber, his son, succeeded him and followed his policy with success. He was the chief who ruled at Koweit at the time of Major Bruck's visit in 1829 (referred to above paragraph 4). In 1854 Sheikh Jaber was still the titular ruling chief, when his age was said to be 102, though his son Sheikh Sabah, was the practical ruler, being himself 70 years old at the time. At the time of Colonel Pelly's visit in 1865, Sheikh Sabah, son of Jaber, was the chief and was 80 years old.

*Sheikhs of Koweit,
1716-1896.*

Dowding says that Sheikh Mahomed bin Sabah was the chief in 1871, but it is not known when he succeeded. But from the Gulf Administration Report for 1892-93, it appears that Abdullah bin Sabah Chief of Koweit, died in 1892 and was succeeded by his brother Mahomed.

[See for Genealogical Table, Appendix B.]

II.—Murder of Mahomed bin Sabah and his brother Jarrah by Mubarak and Mubarak's succession, 1896.

19. Sheikh Sabah thus appears to have died between 1871 and 1890 leaving behind six sons.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Abdullah. | } by the same mother. |
| 2. Mahomed. | |
| 3. Jarrah. | |
| 4. Mubarak. | |
| 5. Ahmed. | |
| 6. Jaber. | |

Abdullah, who appears to have succeeded Sheikh Sabah, died in 1892.

Mahomed then succeeded his brother Abdullah as Chief of Koweit, but he was not popular with the tribes, and seems to have quarrelled with his other brothers except Jarrah. The result was that a conspiracy was hatched against him and Jarrah by the other brothers and they were assassinated in May 1896, and Mubarak stepped into the vacant place. The event caused little excitement locally, but a garbled account of it, connecting the murder of the two brothers with a British intrigue, reached the palace at Constantinople, and caused some sensation, Mr. Stavrides, Legal adviser to the British Embassy, heard of this and drew up the following memorandum (dated 30th June 1896), which is interesting as showing the ideas prevailing at the time of Koweit affairs in Constantinople,

Secret E., November 1896, Nos. 181-187.

and as having been the first report that attracted the attention of the British Government to Koweit affairs :—

"I have just received information from a trustworthy source in connection with an incident which took place in the port of Koweit, in the Persian Gulf, which much disturbed and occupied the palace within these last days. In supplying this information I considered that it might be useful to preface it with a geographical and historical summary of the said country. Koweit, as you are probably aware, is a port of Arabia near Bussorah. Its soil is sandy and without any culture; the population of the town amounts to 50,000 souls. Its inhabitants are fisher men, generally both for fish and pearls, in the waters of Bahrein and Katar. Their trade is limited only to India, where they go and



come in their boats. The province of Koweit, which depends upon the Governor of this town is inhabited by Nomads who are shepherds, and who can supply 10,000 warriors. The people of the town possess Martini rifles, but those of the interior, old-fashioned weapons and rifles. The governing family's name is Sabah, which is a branch of the family Entbe which reigns at Bahrein, and of which the reigning branch is named Khalifa. The title of the family in question is Cheikh. *The country of Koweit, although entirely independent, figures in the maps as being a part of the Ottoman Empire. The reigning family possesses large landed property at Bussorah, and especially at Fao, which belongs to them; that is the reason why the Cheikhs accept their investiture being sanctioned by the Sultan, who grants them the rank of Kaimakan with the title of Pasha, of which the Cheikh does not deign to make use.*

The reigning family was composed of four brothers, one of whom named Abdullah died some time ago. His brother Mahomed succeeded him in the Government of Koweit, and, according to custom, his juniors, Jarrah and Moubarak, assisted him in the exercise of his powers. Lately, the two brother Mahomed and Jarrah have been assassinated. The palace received the information that Mubarak, after a month's residence at Bushire, kept by Her Majesty's Consul, Mr. Wilson, on his return killed his brothers because they objected to an alliance with the Emir Mahomed Ibn Rashid, Cheikh of Chamar and suzerain of Nejd, and with Jasim Thany, Sheikh of the tribes round Katar (town in the possession of the Turks, and depending on the Mutessarif of Lahasa of Nejd, according to the Turks), and who some time ago massacred the Turkish garrison of La Hasa and maintains his independence since.

According to the opinion of the palace, this plan of alliance was suggested to Mubarak by the English Resident of Bushire, and that the object of such an alliance would be an Arabic confederation in which the principality of Bahrein would be comprised.

The palace, unwilling under the present circumstances to cause a new complication to arise, decided to ignore the case of the assassination, and intends to grant to Mubarak the usual investiture, and orders to the effect have been despatched to the Governor-General of Bussorah, instructing him to avoid all shedding of blood."

20. A copy of their memorandum was forwarded to the Government of India and sent by them to Colonel Wilson Political Resident, Persian Gulf, for report, and this was what he had to say in his report dated 3rd October 1896.

No. 196 of proceedings cited.

"The story as gathered by Mr. Stavrides is, as regards this Residency, not only absolutely without foundation, but ludicrously improbable and incongruous on the face of it.

It is true, according to my communication, that Mubarak of the ruling Sheikh family of Koweit, some time ago murdered his two brothers, and I am quite prepared to believe that the "Palace" (i. e., the Porte) decided to ignore the case of the assassination? and has extended its countenance and support to the fratricide.

For the rest, neither I nor any Member of this Residency has ever seen or held communication with Mubarak, nor am I aware of any visit of his to Bushire. Enquiry at the Turkish Vice-Consulate at Bushire has elicited that Mubarak has not visited Bushire for the last three or four years at least, and I have no knowledge of any previous visit. There is no information whatever in this Residency of any proposed alliance of the Koweit Sheikhs, Ibn Rashid and Jasim bin Thani."

21. In July the "Sphinx," with Commander Baker on board, visited Koweit.

His report confirms the usurpation of Mubarak, but he thought that it was done with the concurrence of the people. "No notice" he writes "was at all taken of the proceedings by the Resident, and it was quite apparent that the presence of an English Man-of-war frightened him considerably. *Koweit is nominally an independent Arab territory, but in reality the Turks exercise great influence over it; more especially since the new Chief acceded to power, he finds it necessary to play into their hands.* But he would not come off to the ship. I also noticed that he flew the Turkish flag and taxed him with it, but could not get any satisfactory answer from him. We have no Political Agent (native) here, as we have at all the other large Arab towns."

III.—(1) Proposed Turkish Quarantine station at Koweit and other places in the Persian Gulf. (2) Views of the Government of India and the India Office, 1897.

21-A.—Early in the year 1897 proposals were made by the Constantinople

Secret 1, March 1897, Nos. 87-126.

Secret A., April 1897, No. 8.

Sanitary Board for establishing of Quarantine Stations on the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf, one of which was to be at Koweit and another at Bahrein. Lord Elgin, who was consulted by the Secretary of State, saw no objection to Turkish Quarantine at Koweit, but considered Turkish intervention at other places quite inadmissible.



21-B.—The views of the India Office are expressed in the following extract of Sir A. Godley's letter dated 12th February 1897:—

Secret L, April 1897, No. 8.

"Lord George Hamilton desires me to add that he concurs in these views as to Bahrein and Katar, and considers that Turkish intervention even on the pretext of Sanitary precaution, should not be permitted either on the Katar coast or at Bahrein. But the Viceroy's telegram apparently excludes Katif also from Turkish control, whereas it would seem that Katif is a part of the Hasa province within the dominions of the Ottoman Porte as specified in the Foreign Office telegram to Sir W. White, dated the 29th August 1888. As regards Koweit, Sir Philip Currie's letter No. 972, dated the 24th November 1896, as well as the memorandum by Mr. Atavrides, dated the 30th June 1896, hardly support the Turkish claim to a protectorate over Koweit, and Lord George Hamilton is therefore to this extent unable to acquiesce in the view put forward in the Viceroy's telegram."

21-C.—What action was taken upon this it is not clear. The fact was that the Turkish Government established a Quarantine Station at Koweit.

IV.—⁽¹⁾Haripasa Piracy case. ⁽²⁾Warning to Sheikh of Koweit. ⁽³⁾Status of Sheikh of Koweit. ⁽⁴⁾Question of Protectorate over Koweit raised—1895-1896.

22. In 1895-1896 reports were received of several piracies on the Shatt-al-Arab. Among these the most serious was one committed against a ship, called *Haripasa*, belonging to a subject of the Jamnagar State. It was on its way to Basrah to bring dates and was attacked and robbed on 22nd August 1895 by some 30 pirates near Fao. The pirates killed four members of the crew and wounded four of them, and also carried away about Rs. 3,400 in cash.

External A, May 1896, Nos. 217-233.

23. The difficulty was on whom the blame should be fixed. It was supposed that both Persian and Turkish subjects combined in these piracies.

There was little doubt that the Sheikh of Koweit knew well who the culprits were. Almost all the land in the vicinity of Fao, was as the British Consul at Basrah Captain (Whyte) reported, owned by the Sheikh of Koweit and his Mukhtar had 5 Sons living at Gusba, a village on the Persian bank opposite Fao, where many of the pirates lived. The British Consul also thought that the Sheikh of Mohammerah was also equally informed. He therefore proposed

Letter No. 623, dated 20th October 1896.
No. 62 of Proceedings cited.

that both the Governments, Persian and Turkish, should be asked to call upon these Sheikhs to produce the pirates and in the event of their failure to comply, to recover from them in equal shares the amount of indemnity which Government might decide to demand. Another proposal was made by the Consul-General, Baghdad (Mr. Mockler) that both the Persian and Turkish Governments should be called upon to appoint a joint Commission to investigate into the case of the piracy. A third proposal was to make the Sheikh of Koweit alone responsible, as the culprits were mainly traced to his territory or lands. The difficulty, however, was whether, the British Government could deal with him directly, since it was supposed that the Sheikh acknowledged the Porte as his Suzerain. On the other hand there was reason to believe that the Sheikh was in reality an independent potentate and only nominally subject to the Sultan, and Sir Philip Currie thought for this reason and for other reasons it would be impractical to call upon the Turkish Government to make the Sheikh of Koweit produce the pirates.

No. 60 of Secret E, April 1897, Nos. 35-73.

24. The Government of India in their despatch to the Secretary of State, No. 27, dated 24th February 1897, expressed therefore the following opinion:—

"It appears to us that there might be advantage in fixing upon the Turkish Government the responsibility for the Sheikh of Koweit's actions. A state of affairs in which he can shelter himself under a nominal subjection to the Porte, while the Porte can disclaim at will any responsibility is in the last degree unsatisfactory."

No. 66 of Secret E, April 1897, Nos. 35-73.



25. When these proposals were being discussed, the Political Resident (Colonel Meade) telegraphed on 25th February 1897 :—

Secret E., May 1897, Nos. 101-115.
" Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit wishes interview with me or other on my part. Would it be expedient with reference to my letter of 3rd October."

This last letter is quoted above (see paragraph 20.)

No. 103 of Proceedings cited.

March 1897.

" In Lord Salisbury's opinion it seems desirable that Sheikh should have interview, but he thinks that the matter might be perhaps best left to the Resident's consideration."

26. The Secretary of State, whose instructions were asked, wired on 24th March 1897.

No. 108 of Do.
27. Meanwhile Captain Whyte, who had been Consul at Basrah, had left the place and on his arrival at Constantinople placed before Sir P. Currie a memorandum he had drawn upon 22nd March, which throws much light on the politics of Koweit at that time :—

" I have perused Mr. Stavrides's memorandum regarding Koweit and the recent assassination of Sheikhs Mohammed and Jarrah, and I propose to indicate the points on which the information which reached me at Bassorah differs from his.

Mr. Stavrides's geographical description of Koweit appears to be entirely correct. He states that the reigning family of Koweit, before the assassination of the two Sheikhs, consisted of four brothers. I believe it to have consisted of five brothers, the four whose names he mentions and a fifth named Sheikh Jabber. I may mention that Sheikh Jabber called on me when I was at Fao in November 1897, and described himself as Sheikh Mubarak's brother.

Mr. Stavrides describes Koweit as being entirely independent, but it seems to me that the acceptance by the Sheikh of an appointment of the Sultan as a Kaimmakam precludes the possibility of any foreign power recognising under the present conditions his independence. The present Sheikh, Sheikh Mubarak, when at Fao in November 1897, officially visited the Turkish Mudir of that place, a proceeding hardly consonant with the dignity of an independent Arab Chief. The information which Mr. Stavrides has derived from Palace sources is, I believe, wholly inaccurate. I was assured at Bassorah that Sheikh Mubarak's sole object in killing his two brothers was to usurp the Sheikdom and to possess himself of the wealth, stated to be very considerable, which Sheikh Muhammad had accumulated. Of the alliance to which Mr. Stavrides refers I heard no mention. The Sheikh has since his usurpation been employing his late brother's wealth to secure his recognition as Sheikh, and his appointment of Kaimmakam of Koweit by the sublime Porte. In this he is reported to have succeeded. The late Wali of Bassorah, Hamdi Pasha, refused, I believe, a bribe of £10,000, which the Sheikh offered for his friendly offices with the Porte, and strongly urged that Mubarak should not be recognised and that Koweit should be brought more directly under Turkish influence. The present Wali has, it appears, received instructions to recognise the usurper, who is described as having bribed freely in Constantinople among others, the Sheikh-ul-Islam and Sheikh Abdul Huda, and I learned before my departure from Bassorah that Arifi Pasha had accepted a present of £27,000 from him. It is not improbable that there will be further trouble at Koweit; the sons of the murdered Sheikh Mahomed are reported to have a considerable following, and they will doubtless on the first favourable opportunity make an effort to avenge the assassination of their father."

28. The report that Mubarak was recognized as Sheikh and appointed Kaim Makam (Sub-Governor) of Koweit about the close of the year 1897, was confirmed by Captain Whyte's successor Mr. Wratislaw in his letter No. 21, dated 22nd April 1899. Meanwhile Sheikh Mubarak's nephews (Hamud, Khalid, Sabah and Sawu), sons of his murdered brother Mahomed, were agitating at Basrah against the Sheikh, their maternal uncle Yusuf-el-Ibrahim of Dora, a wealthy merchant, who had a firm in Bombay—had espoused their cause. They sought, under his influence, the protection of Ibn Rashid, Amir of Nejd. The Amir in his turn tried to interest the Turkish Government in their behalf.

No. 113, Secret E., June 1899, Nos 94-119.
29. It will be noted from the words italicised in Captain Whyte's memorandum that he entirely traverses the statement of Mr Stavrides that the Sheikh of Koweit is independent. In view of these conflicting statements, Sir P. Currie, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, enquired what was the view of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Turkish authority. The answer was as follows :—

" Her Majesty's Government has never admitted that Koweit is under the protection of the Turkish Government. But since it is under Turkish influence, it is doubtful, whether we could deny the latter."





30. On his arrival in England, Captain Whyte reported that before his departure from Basrah, he had learnt that the object of Sheikh Mubarak, in wishing for an interview with the British Resident at Bushire, was in order that he might ask for the establishment of a British protectorate over Koweit. Lord George Hamilton then asked Lord Salisbury's opinion whether this intelligence should be communicated to the Government of India and whether an intimation should be added that the Foreign Office would not favour the proposal for a British protectorate over Koweit. It would appear that no action was taken on this at the time.

31. As regards the *Haripasa* piracy case, the Secretary of State on 4th May asked the opinion of the Viceroy on Mr. Mockler's suggestion for demanding a joint Persian-Turkish Commission, and at the same time added:—

"Lord Salisbury also suggests, when opportunity presents itself, Resident might convey to Sheikh Kow-it serious warning that his responsibility will be enforced if his subjects are not restrained in future from committing attacks upon British baghlas. Please instruct Resident if you agree."

32. The Viceroy telegraphed on 9th May that he saw no use in demanding of Persia that she should join in a Commission to find out who the pirates were, and that he was instructing the Resident as suggested. At the same time the following telegram was sent to the Resident:

"I assume, you have not yet met Sheikh of Koweit, Her Majesty's Government wish when you meet him, you would convey to Sheikh serious warning that his responsibility will be enforced if his subjects are not restrained in future from committing attacks on British baghlas."

33. It is interesting to note that in the Foreign Department here, the Secretary of State's instructions in his telegram of 4th May were deemed to amount to a repudiation of the shadowy suzerainty of the Porte over Koweit, and would be driving the thin end of the wedge towards a British protectorate over Koweit (see notes of Mr. Bosanquet and Sir W. J. Cunningham).

34. The proposal as to the joint Commission was ultimately dropped, especially as it was proposed by Lord George Hamilton that a British officer should have a seat on it, and there would be found many difficulties in the way of the appointment of such a mixed Commission.

35. The following telegraphic correspondence must then be read about the visit of a British officer to the Sheikh of Koweit and the genesis of the agreement we afterwards made with him:—

(1) Telegram, No. 1168-E. A., dated the 20th July 1897.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,

To—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.

My telegram, May 9th. Did Wilson meet Koweit Sheikh or convey warning? If not will you shortly have opportunity of doing so?

Secret E.
November
1897, Nos. 83-
141.
No. 88.

(2) Telegram, dated the 21st July 1897.

From—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

No. 89.

Your telegram of yesterday about Koweit. I find Colonel Wilson did not convey the warning contained in your telegram of 9th May 1897 to Sheikh. However, our Bahrein Agent now reports that Sheikh Mubarak has sent delegate to me with certain proposals from Sheikh. Am directing Agent to come here at once with delegate and propose sending warning conveyed in your telegram through delegate, unless you wish me depute an Assistant from Residency to visit Koweit for the purpose.



No. 90. (3) Telegram, No. 1199-E. A., dated the 26th July 1897.
From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.
Your telegram, July 21st. You may communicate warning through delegate if he appears reliable and suitable person. Should Mubarak's proposals be important, telegraph them in cypher and detain delegate pending instructions.

No. 91. (4) Telegram, dated the 23rd July 1897.
From—The Secretary of State, London,
To—The Viceroy, Simla.
It is reported from Bagdad that Sheikh Yusuf Ibrahim with large force, partly drawn from Persian Gulf Coast, attacked Koweit 30th June, and was repulsed. Currie informed by Lord Salisbury that, unless Chiefs under treaty intervene, or the case is one of piracy affecting British subjects, matters do not affect us; *it was added that while we have not recognised Turkish protection over Koweit, it is doubtful whether we could deny Turkish influence.* A later telegram reports inhabitants of Zobair have applied to the Porte to remove Sheikh Mubarak; meantime, son of the late Sheikh asks for British influence promising to accept protection. Turkish Corvette is reported to be awaiting orders from Porte before commencing offensive operations. Lord Salisbury does not think British action called for. I propose to concur in this view.

No. 92. (5) Telegram, No. 1200-E. A., dated the 26th July 1897.
From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.
Secretary of State for India telegraphs under date 23rd July :—
Begins. " (Reported.....concur)." Ends. Who is Sheikh Yusuf Ibrahim ? Have you any suggestions ?

No. 93. (6) Telegram, dated the 27th July 1897.
From—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.
Your two cypher telegrams received. I will report on Sheikh Mubarak's proposals for your consideration, when delegate comes. I understand from the Sheikh's letter to our Agent that he intends to ask for British protection to the exclusion of Turkish influence. As regards the attack on Koweit in June, original reports were exaggerated and transpired that it was attempted by one Sheikh Yusuf bin Ibrahim of Dera, who has a long standing quarrel with Mubarak. He was at Basrah end of June and collected small force at Hindiyan to attack Mubarak: finding, however, that he was prepared, Yusuf retreated without firing a shot. British Agent at Fao reports that Yusuf supposed to be under British protection and is old Indian trader. This occurrence does not directly affect us, but Turkish Government may make it an excuse to extend their influence in Koweit; and if they send Corvette I would suggest British gun-boat's going also.

No. 94. (7) Telegram, No. 1212-E. A., dated the 29th July 1897.
From—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla,
To—The Secretary of State for India, London.
Your Lordship's telegram of 23rd July. Koweit. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reports that Yusuf's attack was in pursuance of a private quarrel and was exaggerated. He retired without firing a shot. I agree that the British action is not called for. A delegate from Mubarak is on his way to Bushire. I shall telegraph his proposals. Colonel Wilson did not warn Mubarak about piracy, see my telegram of 9th May. Major Meade will probably convey the warning through the delegate. Colonel Loch enquires what orders have been passed regarding the Commission, and reports that another piracy occurred on May 12th off Koweit.

No. 95. (8) Telegram, dated the 30th July 1897.
From—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.
In continuation of my telegram of the 27th of July. Bahrein Agent did not arrive yesterday, but reported that delegate of Mubarak returned to Koweit on hearing that Sheikh Yusuf bin Ibrahim is coming to Bahrein. Agent writes he has written to Mubarak, and delegate again. As this will entail further delay, should I wait his arrival before communicating warning? I am informed Turkey compelled Yusuf to leave Basrah and that he intends settling in Bahrein.



(9) Telegram, No. 1234-E. A., dated Simla, the 1st August 1897.

No. 96.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Your telegram 30th July. Warn Mubarak. Use your discretion as to deputing assistant.

(10) Telegram, dated the 11th August 1897.

No. 97.

From—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

Sheikh Yusuf mentioned in my previous telegram, now at Bahrein, wished come here. I propose to tell his Agent, who is here, that Sheikh can come if he wished, but I cannot promise to consider his case. Agent says that one-third Koweit belongs to Yusuf and that Mubarak has dispossessed him.

(11) Telegram, No. 1313-E.A., dated the 17th August 1897.

No. 101.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Your telegram 11th August. You should tell Yusuf's Agent that the British Government will give him no support against Koweit.

(12) Telegram, dated the 22nd August 1897.

No. 110.

From—The Resident, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

Your telegram of the 17th August received. I have intimated to Sheikh Yusuf's Agent as directed in it. He says, Yusuf only desires our good offices with Mubarak to induce latter restore his property and that of son, late Sheikh assassinated by Mubarak. I understand that Chief, Bahrein, who is related to family would arbitrate if we do not disapprove, but not otherwise. This might be permitted I think. Our Bahrein Agent has arrived with letters from Mubarak who says that he has no one sufficiently intelligent to send to Bushire and begs that somebody may be sent to him from Residency to whom he will explain his views. As Prideaux has arrived I propose sending Gaskin shortly to Koweit to convey warning of Government. He can also ascertain what Mubarak has to say and on his return I will report. Gaskin will be directed not to make any reply.

(13) Telegram, No. 1367-E.A., dated Simla, the 29th August 1897.

No. 111.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Your telegram 22nd August. There appears no objection to Bahrein Chief arbitrating between Mubarak and Yusuf at request of both parties, but if you send Gaskin to Koweit you had better await his report before doing anything.

(14) Telegram, dated the 10th September 1897.

No. 112.

From—The Resident, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

Your telegram of 29th August 1897.

"Gaskin conveyed warning to Mubarak who is willing to accept arbitration of Bahrein Sheikh. Report by letter on these points will follow. Mubarak informed Gaskin he and his people aware Turkey intends to absorb Koweit, and to avoid this they desire British protection on same terms Bahrein and Trucial Chiefs. Present seems good opportunity to establish British influence in Koweit which will certainly be place great importance. Mubarak stated no agreement with Turkey exists, but he undoubtedly flies Turkish flag, and his predecessor accepted title of Kaim-Makam from Constantinople. This, however, does not seem insuperable objection to the extension of our influence, as Turks have never exercised sovereign right at, nor have we admitted their protection over, Koweit. Unless therefore we are prepared to allow Turkey absorb Koweit, I strongly advise that I may be permitted to proceed further with negotiations. Resident in Turkish Arabia holds similar views."

36. Major Meade reported the proceedings of Mr. Gaskin at length with his remarks in his letter No. 90, dated 25th September 1897:—

"In continuation of my telegram in cypher of the 10th instant regarding Koweit affairs, I have the honor to report, for the information of the Government of India, that Mr. Gaskin, the Extra Assistant to the Resident in the Persian Gulf, visited Koweit in the R. I. M. S. No. 120 of Secret E., November 1897, Nos. 33-141.



Lawrence on the 5th instant, and had two interviews with Sheikh Mubarak-Subah, the present Chief. Captain Hewett of the *Lawrence*, was present at these meetings, which took place on shore, the Sheikh preferring not to come on board the *Lawrence*, explaining that his doing so might get him into trouble with the Turkish authorities, with whom he must keep on good terms until our protection is assured.

The primary and ostensible object of Mr. Gaskin's visit to Koweit was to convey to Sheikh Mubarak the warning of the British Government conveyed in your cypher telegram of the 9th May 1897, informing him that he will be held responsible for any piratical attacks on British vessels committed by Koweit people. Mr. Gaskin duly conveyed this message to the Sheikh, who, he reports, was much concerned at receiving it. He denied that his subjects at Koweit itself engage in piracy, but admitted that people employed in certain date-gardens of his near Basrah may do so, adding that he has no control over them. He went on to state that the head quarters of the pirates are on the other side of the Gulf, and that Koweit vessels are also plundered by them. That when he has applied for assistance from the Turkish authorities, the only result has been extortion on the part of the officers and soldiers sent to investigate the cases in question.

He had asked the Wali of Basrah for permission to keep two or three armed vessels to patrol the mouth of the Shat-al-Arab, but this was not allowed, and he has now directed that Koweit boats shall not go singly, but always in twos and threes.

He concluded by saying that he fully recognized the necessity for prompt co-operation with the British Government and would be glad to give their representative any information he could regarding piracies, and assist in the capture and destruction of the pirates.

As regards the dispute between Sheikh Mubarak on the one side and his nephews, sons of the late Sheikh, and Yusuf bin Ibrahim on the other, Sheikh Mubarak told Mr. Gaskin that he would like to have the mediation of Sheikh Esa of Bahrein, who was a relation, and well qualified for the task. He said that his nephews had lived on good terms with him after their father's death, and that it was in consequence of the intrigues of Sheikh Yusuf that they had turned against him. He added that although he was quite prepared to come to terms with his nephews, he thought they should not be allowed to live at Koweit. In this he is probably right, for it must be remembered that Sheikh Mubarak assassinated the father of these young men, and nothing that he may do will absolve him in their eyes from the guilt of this crime, or do away with the necessity for revenge on their part.

If the other side is also prepared to accept the mediation of Sheikh Esa of Bahrein, I think he may be informed that we have no objection to his undertaking the task.

I now come to the most important part of Mr. Gaskin's mission, which was to ascertain distinctly what the Sheikh's views are in regard to certain advances he has been making or late through our Agent at Bahrein, with a view to our extending to Koweit the protection we give to other places on the Arab Coast.

Mr. Gaskin reports that Sheikh Mubarak told him that he and his people wish Koweit to be placed under British protection, such as is enjoyed by Bahrein and the Trucial Chiefs. If the British Government will extend its protection to him, he says he is prepared to assist the British in maintaining law and order in that part of the Gulf with the full force at his disposal, which he states amounts to 25,000 tribesmen.

There is no doubt before he approached us, Sheikh Mubarak did his utmost to secure his recognition by the Turkish authorities, and that his efforts in that direction have cost him considerable sums. The Porte, however, have as yet refrained from definitely acknowledging his position, and it appears to me that the Sheikh's advances to us may be made with the object of inducing the Turkish Government, to hasten their movements.

On the other hand, however, he explained to Mr. Gaskin that he had found the Turks grasping and unreliable, and that he and his people believed they intended ere long to entirely absorb Koweit. It was to prevent this, he said, that he wished for British protection.

There can be no doubt that Sheikh Mubarak, like other small Chiefs on the Arab Coast, is quite ready to ask for British or Turkish protection as appears best for his own interests, and I doubt if we would have heard much of his desire for our help, if the Turks had at once acknowledged him. They, however, appear to be anxious to defer coming to any definite settlement of the succession to the Sheikhship, the delay being probably in consequence of the wish of the local officials to get as much as they can out of both claimants.

The delay, whatever its causes, has given us an opportunity of extending our influence in Koweit, which would, I believe, be highly advantageous to our interests for many reasons.

Koweit possesses an excellent harbour, and will, under our protection, undoubtedly become one of the most important places in the Persian Gulf. Apart from the chances of its being the sea port for the projected railway from Port Said, which is under consideration and which the possession of Koweit, would enable us to protect, the trade with the interior is already considerable, and will greatly increase. At present, in spite of the Sheikh's assertions, it is regarded as a centre for piratical expeditions, and therefore, endangers our trade with the Shat-al-Arab. Finally, it is said that it is a great slave emporium, and that our efforts to put a stop to the slave trade are more or less barren of results, as long as slaves can be marched across Arabia, and shipped at Koweit for Turkey and Persia.



Piracy and the slave trade would receive a blow if we brought the place under our protection, and it would also enable us to exercise a supervision over its trade which would undoubtedly advance our interests in the Persian Gulf.

As far then as we are concerned, it seems advisable to fall in with Sheikh Mubarak's views, and to extend to Koweit and its ruler the protection enjoyed by Bahrein and other places on the Arab Coast; but I am aware that the Turkish Government claims a certain amount of influence in the place, the Sheikh, for instance, flies a Turkish flag over his own residence, and his predecessor had the title of Kaim-Makam conferred on him by the Porte.

These facts, however, do not, I think, constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the extension of our own influence. We have never admitted Turkish authority in Koweit, and the Turks, as far as I am aware, have never entered into formal agreements with the Sheikh, nor have they ever exercised sovereign rights at the place.

If this is correct, it would seem that the Sheikh is at liberty to enter into negotiations with any other nation, and that there is no objection to our extending our influence in a manner which must eventually prove advantageous to ourselves and to the advance of civilization.

As mentioned in my confidential telegram already referred to, the views of Colonel Loch, Resident, Turkish Arabia, which were conveyed to me by Major Fagan, now Political Agent at Mascat, coincide with mine.

V.—⁽¹⁾ Mubarak's nephew seeks British Protection ⁽²⁾ Threatened attack of Sheikhs Jasim bin Thani and Yusuf bin Ibrahim on Koweit—⁽³⁾ Question of Protectorate over Koweit discussed, 1897-98.

37. It must also be mentioned here that Lieutenant-Colonel Mowbray No. 81 of Secret E., May 1898, Nos. 78-103. reported on 7th July 1897 to Colonel Meade that the piracies near Fao were organised for the most part by Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit, though the pirates themselves were composed of both Turks and Persian subjects, that the Sheikh was an usurper whom the rightful heir, a son of the murdered brother of the Sheikh, was seeking to drive from Koweit, with the assistance of his uncle Yusuf bin Ibrahim of Dora; that he (the nephew) had asked to be taken under the British protection. Colonel Mowbray pointed out that there was therefore a good opportunity for bringing Koweit under our control and thus putting down piracies. He also reported that Yusuf bin Ibrahim had on 30th of June (1897) attacked Koweit, but that he had been repulsed.

38. With reference to Colonel Meades' telegram dated 10th September No. 116 of Secret E., November 1897, Nos. 1897—No. (14) in paragraph 35 above—about Mr. Gaskin's visit to Koweit, the Viceroy telegraphed to the Secretary of State on 19th September 1897:—

"The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf deputed his Assistant to Koweit to warn Mubarak about piracy. Mubarak asks for British protection on the same terms as the Bahrein and Trucial Chiefs, alleging that Turkey intends to absorb Koweit. Mubarak stated that no agreement with Koweit exists. Instructions are solicited."

39. In reply the Secretary of State telegraphed on 13th October that No. 121 of Secret E., November 1897, Nos. 88-141. "Her Majesty's Government are not disposed to interfere more than necessary for maintenance of general peace of Persian Gulf or to bring Koweit under protection."

40. On the 17th October 1897, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf telegraphed:—

"My letter 25th September. It is reported that Turkish gunboat has left Basrah for Nos. 122-123 of cruise along Arabian Coast, and it is said that she is to devote particular attention to Koweit. Proceedings cited. If Turks absorb Koweit it will probably affect British India trade Shat-el-Arab."

41. Upon this, the following telegram (No. 1635-E.A., dated the 20th October 1897), was despatched by the Viceroy to the Secretary of State:—

Your telegram* 13th October. Political Resident's full report on his Assistant's visit to Koweit states that Koweit is centre for piratical expeditions which endanger our trade with Shat-el-Arab. This is corroborated by independent reports of naval officers. Resident also states Koweit is great slave emporium. He now telegraphs Turkish gunboat has left Basrah for Arabian Coast, and it is said she will devote particular attention to Koweit. Papers will be posted 21st October from Simla.



42. In view of the facts noted above, the Government of India in their
No. 124 of Secret E., November 1897, Nos. 83-141. Despatch No. 147, dated 21st October 1897, referring to their telegram of 20th October, enquired whether Her Majesty's Government found any reason to modify the policy indicated in the Secretary of State's telegram of 13th October (paragraph 39 *supra*).

43. In September 1897 reports were received that Sheikh Jasim bin Thani
No. 135 of Secret E., November 1897, Nos. 83-141. was collecting the Bedouin tribes and making other preparations to help Yusuf bin Ibrahim and the sons of Mahomed Sabah to march against Sheikh Mubarak bin Sabah, Chief of Koweit, that it was intended to make attacks by land as well as by sea and that Mahomed Ibn Rashid had been informed by Sheikh Jasim and the others by letter of their intentions and asked to either give open help or to prevail upon the "Ojaman" tribe, who lived in the vicinity of Koweit and who were Sheikh Mubarak's best fighting men, not to block their entrance into Koweit, but to observe neutrality. It was also rumoured that the Mutasarrif of Hasa, hearing of the movements of Sheikh Jasim, wrote asking him not to take action on Turkish soil, but that Sheikh Jasim paid no heed to the Mutasarrif, as he had sent a telegraphic complaint to the Sublime Porte and expected a reply.

44. The following telegraphic correspondence then passed between the Political Resident, the Government of India and the Secretary of State :—

Secret E., November 1897, Nos. 83-141.

(1) Telegram, dated Bushire, the 24th October 1897.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

No. 129.

In continuation of my telegram of the 17th of October, it is reported that Sheikh Jasim bin Thani of Katar and Sheikh Yusuf intend attack on Koweit about 6th of November. Shall I send gun-boat watch events.

No. 130.

(2) Telegram, P., No. 1656 E. A., dated the 27th October 1897.

From—The Viceroy, Simla,

To—The Secretary of State, London.

Please see my telegram 20th October. Political Resident hears that Sheikh Jasim of Katar and Sheikh Yusuf intend attack on Koweit about 6th November and asks whether he should send gun boat to watch events. If report is true, Sheikh Jasim is probably acting in Turkish interests. Instructions are requested.

No. 131.

(3) Telegram P., dated the 30th October 1897.

From—The Secretary of State, London,

To—The Viceroy, Simla.

Please see your telegram of the 27th. Koweit. No objection to sending gun boat to watch events, provided Commander instructed not to interfere unless they directly menace British interests.

No. 132.

(4) Telegram, No. 1677-E.A., dated the 1st November 1897.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,

To—The Resident, in Bushire.

Your telegram October 24th. Koweit. No objection to sending gunboat to watch events provided Commander is instructed not to interfere unless British interests are directly menaced.

No. 133.

(5) Telegram, dated Bushire, the 9th November 1897.

From—The Political Resident, Persian Gulf,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

Your telegram of the 1st November. Her Majesty's ship "Pigeon" went to Koweit and has returned here. Captain Mowbray reports all quiet and that Sheikh declares that he is quite prepared to resist any attack from Arabian coast. Sheikh told Commander of



"Pigeon" he is very anxious to be brought under British protection; he said that he had heard of a project for railway and wished for it; that the Bedouins of the interior are his warm supporters and will not oppose railway. Full report will follow next mail.

(6) Telegram P., No. 1726-E.A., dated the 11th November 1897.

No. 189.

From—The Viceroy, Simla,

To—The Secretary of State, London.

Koweit. Resident was authorised in terms of your telegram 30th October to send gunboat, which has now returned. All was quiet. Sheikh told Commander he is very anxious to be brought under protection of the British Government.

45. The decision arrived at by the Secretary of State on Government of India's telegram dated 11th November (last quoted) and their despatch of 21st October (paragraph 42 above) was telegraphed on 3rd December 1897:—

"I adhere to instructions in my telegram of 11th October, but *consider there is nothing in the political situation of Koweit to hamper the naval officers in bringing home to Sheikh responsibility for piratical acts.*"

VI.—(1) Movements of Turkish troops towards Koweit. (2) Russian intrigues. (3) Question of Protectorate over Koweit further discussed, 1897-98.

46. On the 16th December 1897 Colonel Meade telegraphed regarding a projected movement of Turkish troops from Baghdad to Fao, and also of the death of Mahomed Ibn Rashid Chief of Jebel Shammar and Nejd. He was succeeded by his nephew Abdul Aziz without opposition.

47. On the 22nd of December three battalions of Turkish infantry left Baghdad in two steamers for Basrah, it was believed, in response to a request made by the Sheikh of Koweit for assistance against Sheikhs Jasim and Yusuf. The Turkish Government tried to repress the movements of Sheikh Jasim in Katar, but Jasim attacked the Turkish battalion at Bidaa, and captured it. He soon released it and sent an ambassador to Constantinople to represent matters in a favourable light. These facts were telegraphed on 22nd and 23rd December 1897 by Colonel Meade—upon telegrams sent by the Political Resident, Turkish Arabia (Colonel Loch). On 22nd December Colonel Loch reported in detail the

Pro. No. 87 and 89 of Proceedings cited.

* movements in question and observed as follows:—

"But it might be said that the affairs at Koweit are beyond my sphere, and more properly connected with that of the Resident, Persian Gulf. This is true, but I submit most deferentially that the occupation by the Porte of Koweit would be a standing menace to our trade interests in Turkish Arabia. Scarcely a day passes, but attempts are made to hamper our trade, sometimes by vexatious quarantine regulations, at others by some move on the part of the Turkish authorities to gain complete control over the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab at Fao, and it is from here that they must be watched and their actions checked. There is, however, another matter connected with this question which has lately forced itself on my attention. For some months past vague rumours have been afloat that Russia and her agents were working in the Gulf, and I would invite your attention to my letter No. 615, dated the 15th November in which I forwarded a copy of an Embassy despatch from Constantinople, with enclosure, bringing to my notice that Russia was seeking to acquire a coaling station in that quarter, which confirms to a certain extent these rumours; moreover, from hints I have received, it is Koweit on which Russia's eyes are fixed. You will observe that, according to Consul Dickson's despatch, M. Kronglow, late Russian Consul at Jerusalem, has been instructed to report, after his arrival, on the subject. M. Kronglow has not yet arrived, and it is now doubtful if he will come, owing to a death vacancy at Aleppo in the Russian Consular Service, which he is expected to fill. M. Mashkow will in this case remain, and the matter will be entrusted to him, I presume. M. Mashkow is an intense Anglophobe and extremely active in intrigue, and I firmly believe that the question of the coaling station will in the next few months come permanently to the front."

48. As regards the threatened attack on Koweit, the Government of India, in pursuance of the instructions of the Secretary of State, referred to in the last section in their telegram, dated 22nd December 1897, instructed Colonel Meade that no action should be taken to assist the Sheikh of Koweit without special sanction.

Pro. No. 88 of Secret E., November 1898, Nos. 73-103.



49. As regards the Russian intrigues in the Persian Gulf, to which Colonel Loch referred in his last mentioned report, the Secretary of State enquired, on 7th February 1898, whether His Excellency the Viceroy had any confirmation of the suspected Russian designs on Koweit. The Viceroy replied on 9th February in the negative, but added: "Colonel Meade reports that a M. Adamoff, who accompanied two Russian doctors ostensibly on plague duty last year, visited Baghdad in August after touring about the Gulf. Adamoff is not a Doctor. The report referred to was a demi-official letter of Colonel Meade, dated 10th January 1898. The two Doctors were—one Mare and the other Oust. They said that they had been deputed to study plague by their Government. There were however, no signs of any plague in the Persian Gulf at the time.

50. Jasim soon again embroiled himself in a Koweit affair with the Turks. In March 1898, Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit led an attack against the Howair tribe of Bedouins, who were under the protection of Jasim bin Thani and, after defeating them, captured a large number of cattle. This was resented very much by Jasim and his Arabs, and as they suspected that Sheikh Mubarak had acted under Turkish support, they had a quarrel with the Turkish soldiers in Katar. A free fight then ensued between the Arabs and the soldiers, and it was even said that the Turkish garrison was attacked by Jasim. This affair only resulted to an increase of Turkish soldiers in their posts in Hasa and Katar.

VII.—(1) Proposed Protectorate over Koweit (2) Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit, December 1898—May 1899.

51. From the correspondence noted above, it will be seen that late in 1897 and early in 1898 there was disquieting news from the Persian Gulf of movements of Turkish troops near Basrah, of an alleged Russian mission to Baghdad and of an intention on the part of Russia to acquire a coaling station on the Persian Gulf, possibly Koweit. These reports induced the India Office to ask the Foreign Office (11th February 1898) whether they were in possession of any information as to designs of Foreign powers which might make it desirable to modify the policy of non-intervention in Koweit. To this letter no reply was received till the 5th December 1898. In the interval the Government of India were furnished with a note of Mr. (now Sir) William Lee-Warner, dated 23rd June 1898, printed as *Appendix C* to this Précis and Mr. (now Lord) Curzon had been inquiring into the subject, but officially the question had been allowed to rest; and nothing had occurred to bring it again into prominence until receipt of Sir N. O'Connor's despatch of the first November 1898, which enclosed a Consular Report to the effect that the Vali of Basrah, by sanction of the Porte, had appointed a commission to settle the quarrels between Sheikh Mubarak and his nephews. The India Office then addressed a letter to the Foreign Office (dated 23rd November 1898) drawing attention to the issues raised in the letter of the 11th February. The Foreign Office in reply expressed their readiness to support the Government of India by diplomatic action, should that Government consider that a protectorate over Koweit might be asserted and undertaken by it on its sole responsibility without difficulty or inconvenient extension of police duties in the Gulf. It was added: "It does not appear that there is any foundation in fact for a Turkish claim of sovereignty or control over the district."

52. The following telegram was then despatched by the Secretary of State to the Government of India on 24th December 1898:—

"Foreign Office would approve of protectorate on the understanding that responsibilities for its assertion and maintenance and for control devolved on the Government of India and if you think that it could be undertaken without difficulty or inconvenient extension of duty of police devolving on your Government in the Gulf I like should to know the opinion of the Government of India with special reference to present state of affairs at Koweit and to the measures you could take to make protectorate effective relying on Her Majesty's Government for support at Constantinople diplomatically."



53. This telegram was repeated to the Political Resident, and he was asked to report on the matter, and also to communicate a copy of the telegram to the Resident, Turkish Arabia, for report of a similar kind. Secret E.,
March 1900,
Nos. 581-591.

54. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf replied on 30th December 1898 :— No. 584.

"In reply to your telegram about Koweit, please refer to my letter* of 25th September 1897, No. 90. I am of opinion that I had better, if you concur, visit Koweit without delay and obtain information requested by Secretary of State for India. I strongly recommend before I go that I may be authorised as a preliminary to openly acknowledging protectorate to enter into secret arrangement with Sheikh by which he will be bound not to admit protectorate by any Power other than Great Britain, and I would suggest that we in return agree to support him against all attacks. I understand that Koweit is sufficiently strong to resist any attack by land from either Arab or present Turkish forces at Basrah, and we can stop force by sea with the gun-boat now available. If, however, protectorate is decided upon, to render it effectual, our naval force in Persian Gulf should be temporarily increased, and I would recommend cruiser and gun-boat be despatched direct Bushire without previous intimation to Commanders of intended duties. I cannot communicate with Resident in Turkish Arabia in cypher code, but will send your message in cypher, and I will also ascertain from Consul at Basrah what force available there. As prompt measures may be necessary, I am inclined to think it is better not to await reply from Resident in Turkish Arabia, which will take some time and may not be much use. If we do not admit Turkish right at Koweit, Resident in the Persian Gulf seems best able to deal with question about place which is in the Persian Gulf."

55. No action was apparently taken on this telegram at the time Lord Elgin simply noted on 2nd January :—

"This is a matter of some importance and deserves more consideration than I can give to it. The case might be seen in the Military Department and then be submitted to Lord Curzon."

56. In the Military Department it was proposed to consult the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the question, whether the protectorate could be undertaken without inconvenient extension of duty of police and whether he could arrange for the two extra ships required to lie temporarily in the Gulf during Colonel Meade's visit to Koweit. But it was decided only to inform the Commander-in-Chief demi-officially that two additional ships might possibly be temporarily required in the Gulf before very long.

57. This was on 6th January 1899. On the 5th January 1899 the Secretary of State telegraphed :—

"O'Connor urges cautious and quiet procedure in respect to Koweit since any formal declaration of protectorate would be considered little short of hostile act by Turkey and would certainly produce very serious diplomatic complications with Turkey and also with Russia probably." No. 591.

58. On 6th January Her Majesty's Secretary of State telegraphed :—

"Continuation of my telegram. Koweit. Lord Salisbury concurs in the opinion of O'Connor as to the expediency of avoiding at present overt step towards establishing protectorate, but desires to take precautions against any Russian territorial claims, which may possibly result from Kapnist Railway concession. He, therefore, proposes immediate steps to take engagement from the Sheikh Koweit not to cede, lease, mortgage or otherwise alienate or give for occupation any portion of his territory to the Government or subject of any other Power without obtaining consent of Her Majesty's Government previously. For this purpose Lord Salisbury is prepared to offer five thousand pounds sterling to be advanced by India reserving question of ultimate incidence, and he would even increase offer if necessary. His Lordship desires to know whether you can effect this negotiation speedily and most secretly by agency of officers and vessels at your disposal, or whether the Admiralty should be asked to undertake the matter, to which much importance is attached by His Lordship." No. 592

59. This decision of Her Majesty's Government was arrived at under the following circumstances. About the end of December 1898, there came news that Count Kapnist's application for a concession to build a railway from Tripoli to Koweit was likely to prove successful; and in order to take precautions against any territorial claims which Russia might possibly base upon that concession, it was decided (without waiting for the reply of the Government of

*Vide Paragraph 36 above.



India to the telegram of 24th December—see paragraph 52 above) at the instance of the Foreign Office to instruct His Excellency the Viceroy as in the telegram of 6th January already quoted.

60. The Government of India thereupon (under orders of His Excellency Lord Curzon) telegraphed to the Political Resident as follows on 8th January 1899:—

No. 598.

"Government desire to take immediate steps with utmost secrecy possible in order to avoid suspicions attaching to open protectorate to obtain engagements from Sheikh of Koweit not to cede, lease, mortgage or otherwise alienate or give for occupation any portion of his territory to the Government or subject of any other power without obtaining previous consent of Her Majesty's Government. For this purpose they are prepared to offer 5,000 pounds sterling or even more if absolutely necessary to Sheikh. Please telegraph immediately how you propose to effect this negotiation and if you go to Koweit whether you go in "Lawrence" or in man-of-war; also whether present naval force is sufficient in Gulf."

61. This telegram was repeated to the Secretary of State on 9th January with the addition:—

"Proposed negotiations, if successful, seem to involve ultimate protectorate."

No. 594.

62. There passed then the following telegraphic correspondence between Colonel Meade, His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State:—

No. 595.

(1) Telegram P., dated the 8th January 1899.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

Your Secret telegram. Koweit. I propose going myself in "Lawrence" ostensibly for the purpose of enquiry into the arms traffic, and can arrange trip without causing remark, as I have given out I propose shooting at Kharaj, from which I will cross to Koweit by night. I will start as soon as possible on hearing from you, and will negotiate the terms of agreement which should be made binding on present Sheikh's successor as well as on himself. I would, however, venture to suggest instead of sum down I may be authorised (to) arrange yearly subsidy, conditional on scrupulous observance of the terms by the Sheikh of Koweit, a limit of, say, 1,000 pounds sterling per annum being given. I think also that I may be allowed to assure him of our good offices as long as he adheres to agreement, for, if the other Sheikh's sons overcome Mubarak, they may not consider themselves bound by agreement with him; while, if he has our support, he will probably easily hold his own. As only secret arrangement is contemplated at present, it seems undesirable to attract attention to this part of Gulf and no increase of naval force here is necessary; but if gun boat required Maskat, she should be sent from India and a Cruiser may be held in readiness to come if required.

No. 596.

(2) Telegram P., No. 68-E.A., dated the 14th January 1899.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy, Calcutta,
To—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

Would not agreement concluded by Talbot with Trucial Chiefs in 1892 supply best model for Koweit agreement with additions named by Meade? I think terms suggested by Meade are exorbitant, and that Sheikh would probably sign without subsidy or for much smaller subsidy. In the meantime, Meade is doing nothing until arrival of your instructions.

No. 599.

(3) Telegram P., dated the 17th January 1899.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Calcutta.

Koweit. Your Foreign Secret telegram of 14th January. I prefer terms of declaration dated 20th March 1891, with Maskat to those of agreement in 1892 with the Trucial Chiefs, which goes beyond necessity of the case. I intended that Sheikh of Koweit should bind himself and his successor. I agree with you as to Meade's terms being excessive, and if you think that an annual subsidy is preferable, I think two hundred pounds sterling per annum ought to suffice, but I am ready to leave it to your discretion.



(4) Telegram P., No. 85-E, A., dated the 18th January 1899.

No. 601.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta,
To—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

You should now proceed to Koweit, and unless you are satisfied that Mubarak is in imminent danger of attack supported by Turks or is in precarious position, you should enter into secret agreement with him on model of agreement with Mascot of 20th March 1891, but in more precise terms of my telegram of 8th January binding the Sheikh, his heirs and successors. You may also assure him of our good offices as long as he adheres to agreement. We rather prefer a lump payment to an annual subsidy, but we leave to your discretion. Sums hitherto proposed in either case seem to us excessive, as Sheikh will probably jump at agreement. If you promise annual subsidy, Rs. 3,000 would perhaps suffice, but you must exercise your judgment in the matter.

63. On 28th of January 1899, Colonel Meade telegraphed that he had concluded secret agreement* with Mubarak and that he was sending three copies for ratification by His Excellency the Governor-General. From Colonel Meade's report of his proceedings (No. 10, dated 30th January 1899), it appeared that he proceeded by the *Lawrence* to Koweit on 21st January with Mr. Gaskin. He found the Turkish corvette *Zohaf* in the harbour, but Colonel Meade proceeded to the harbour without minding it. The corvette left the place on the afternoon of the 22nd. Mr. Gaskin first called on the Sheikh. The Sheikh was evidently very gratified at this visit and, being unable himself to go to the British ship without exciting suspicion of the Turks, he deputed his brother Hamad, who was well disposed towards him. The purpose of the visit was then explained to Hamad Colonel Meade from enquiries he made was led to think that there was no reason for anticipating an immediate attack being made on Sheikh Mubarak, whose position was further described as more assured than it had previously been. He therefore concluded that he ought to endeavour to carry out the instructions he had received and conclude the agreement with the Sheikh as soon as he could. Mr. Gaskin ascertained that the Sheikh was anxious to secure—before signing the agreement—to get a written assurance that he would receive British support afterwards, and also to receive Rs. 15,000, equivalent to about £1,000 in return for the engagement not to cede, lease, etc. On the 23rd Colonel Meade met the Sheikh and showed him the draft agreement. It may be noted that it contained a clause, which was not provided for in the instructions of Government *viz.*, that the Sheikh should not receive representatives from other Powers. This condition appeared to Colonel Meade very desirable, as Mubarak had told Mr. Gaskin that he had received overtures from the French.

64. Mubarak's two brothers, who were invited by the Sheikh to attest the document, refused to sign it, because Colonel Meade declined to bind Government to protect the Koweit family in regard to their estates in Turkish territory near Fao, which had been formerly part of Koweit, but had been gradually absorbed by the Turks, their revenue being about £6,000 a year and the chief source of income of the family. Mubarak assured Colonel Meade that the concurrence of his brothers was not necessary to make the agreement binding on his successors. Colonel Meade did not think that the brothers were likely to turn against Mubarak or divulge the agreement, but asked for authority to tell the Sheikh and his brothers that their interests in regard to the Turkish estates would be looked after and receive the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

65. The agreements entered into by Colonel Meade and the Sheikh are printed as Appendix D to this précis.

66. In reporting by telegram, dated 12th February, the purport of these agreements and Colonel Meade's proceedings to the Secretary of State, His Excellency the Viceroy expressed the opinion that it seemed doubtful whether the assurance as regards the Turkish estates should be given, and enquired whether the agreement should be ratified.



No. 647. 67. The Secretary of State telegraphed on 14th February that the agreement might be ratified and that a hope might be held out to Sheikh Mubarak that we would do what we could to protect him and his brothers in the matter of their estate near Fao.

No. 654. 68. The agreement was ratified on 16th February, and this fact as also the Secretary of State's instructions as to the Turkish estates was telegraphed to the Political Resident on 17th February.

No. 657. 69. As regards the third provision in the agreement extending the engagement to territory now in possession of subjects of other Governments, the Political Resident telegraphed on the 19th in reply to an enquiry :—

"I added provision to guard against possible transfer of some house property at Koweit itself belonging to Turkish subjects to Russians or others. Mubarak promised not to permit any such transfer without permission of Her Majesty's Government."

Secret E.
June 1892,
Nos. 94-119.

70. Her Majesty's Government, in expressing their approval of the action of Colonel Meade as regards the agreement, pointed out that in-as-much as

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade had been instructed to conclude an agreement similar to that which exists with the Sultan of Maskat, he was not authorized to stipulate that the Sheikh should not receive representatives from any other Power or Government without the previous sanction of the British Government. As this proviso had been introduced, Her Majesty's Government decided that it should remain in force; but warned that its operation, more especially with regard to the relations of the Sheikh with the Turkish Government, would require the careful attention of the Government of India (see Secretary of State's Despatch No. 11, dated 30th March 1899) :—

No. 101.

No. 118.

71. In his letter No. 70, dated 21st May 1899, Colonel Meade offered the following explanation about the last point :—

"I would explain, for the information of Government of India, that the clause, in the agreement, by which the Sheikh promised not to receive the representatives of other Powers, without the previous sanction of the British Government, was inserted, as I understood such to be the wish of Sheikh Mubarak himself, conveyed to me by my Assistant, Mr. Gaskin, who told me that the Sheikh did not want to have Agents from other Powers, residing at Koweit and would agree to refuse his consent to such arrangements without a reference to the British Government.

As a clause to this effect would be useful later on, and seemed calculated to strengthen our position at Koweit, and as a similar proviso had been inserted in the agreement of the 22nd December 1880 with Sheikh Esa of Bahrein, *vide* Agreement No. XXXI, Aitchison's Treaties, Volume X, page 120, when the Bahrein Sheikh agreed to refuse permission to any other Government than the British, to establish diplomatic or consular agencies in his territory, unless, with the consent of the British Government, I thought the opportunity was a good one to obtain a similar promise from Sheikh Mubarak, as he himself wished to give it.

I do not think the proviso is likely to give rise to any trouble, as the Sheikh will tell the Turks, if they propose sending an Agent to Koweit, that he would prefer not to have one and he will, probably, be able to prevent the appointment being made without any sort of reference to the stipulation in the agreement with us. In the meantime your instructions will be carefully attended to, and any information indicating that the Porte, or any other Power, wishes to send an Agent to Koweit, will be communicated to you without delay. No action, too, will be taken in the matter without your instructions."

Secret E.
June 1899,
Nos. 126-130.

72. As regards the incidence of the advance of Rs. 15,000 made to Sheikh Mubarak, it was decided that £500 were to be borne by Her Majesty's Government and that the balance should be charged on Indian Revenues.

VIII.—Porte's complaints against British proceedings at Koweit as infringement of quarantine regulations April—May, 1899.

73. The proceedings of Colonel Meade at Koweit attracted of course the Porte's attention. A complaint was communicated by the Turkish Quarantine

Secret E., June 1899, Nos. 70-78.

Officer at Basrah to the Ottoman Sanitary Administration regarding the landing of the Commander of the *Lawrence* with a British Political Officer in spite of the sanitary regulations.

74. The Secretary of State having asked for a report, Colonel Meade submitted accounts of the Commander of the *Lawrence* and Mr. Gaskin as to



what had happened. They had landed, as a matter of fact, in disregard of the quarantine placed against arrivals from foreign ports. As regards these proceedings Colonel Meade in his letter No. 59, dated 7th May 1899, made the following observations:—

"The entire responsibility for what they did rests with me. I foresaw that some attempt to stop them would be made on the ground of quarantine, and after a consultation with Captain Hore, I. M. S. who is in charge of the quarantine arrangements here, and the Commander of the *Lawrence*, decided that any protest made against their landing on the ground of there being quarantine against the *Lawrence* should be disregarded.

I arrived at this decision for the following reasons: on two similar previous occasions Captain C. Baker, the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf, successfully resisted an attempt by Turkish Agents to prevent his landing on the ground of quarantine, though his ship, the *Aphiaz*, was not from an effected port and, as regards the official at Koweit, Captain Baker had reported that he considered he was not a regular quarantine officer, but a spy. Beyond this reference to quarantine at Koweit by Captain Baker, no intimation had ever reached me that any arrangements existed at the place, and I did not think that Captain Baker's views were in support of a contention that it did.

Turkey having joined the Venice Convention is, of course, guided by the general rules formulated in 1897, under which healthy ships would not have to be put into quarantine, if their last port is a healthy one, as Bahrein undoubtedly is, no case of plague having occurred there. I considered, therefore, that any attempt by local officials to prevent our landing would be contrary to the rules of the Venice Convention, and would not be supported by the Sanitary Board at Constantinople.

There was nothing in the condition of Bushire, or in that of the *Lawrence*, to make me hesitate about landing on the ground that we might convey disease to Koweit, and there was nothing to show me that regular quarantine existed, as no signals were hoisted and no one came off to examine the ship. From Captain Baker's report referred to, the person representing quarantine arrangements at Koweit is not a regular official and this is borne out by the statement of Mr. Gaskin, who describes him as an ordinary Arab. In short, I came to the conclusion before communicating with the shore that no effective or regular quarantine existed at Koweit, and then even if it did, there was nothing in the rules of the Venice Convention to prevent our communicating with the shore, either from the state of the port from which we had last come, or of the *Lawrence*. Such being the case, I felt I ought not to allow any frivolous objections to stand in the way of my carrying out the orders I had received.

It is, I think, quite clear from the reports of the officers who landed, that no force whatever was employed, and I trust that under the circumstances mentioned, their proceedings, as well as my own, may be approved.

It may perhaps not be out of place to express a hope that, if the Turks are allowed to maintain quarantine at Koweit, steps may be taken to prevent their employing it as a means to to prevent our communicating with the Sheikh. I gather that quarantine arrangements at Koweit under the Sanitary Board at Constantinople will in no way imply that the Turks have any sort of jurisdiction or rights at Koweit, and that the independence of Koweit will not be allowed to be prejudiced by such arrangements. It will, however, be necessary to see that this is clearly understood, and that the Turkish officials are made to adhere strictly to the regulations drawn up by the Venice Convention."

Secrett E., February 1904, Nos. 123&125.

75. The proceedings of Colonel Meade were approved by the Government of India and Her Majesty's Government.

IX.—(1) Threatened attack on Koweit by the Turks. (2) Defence of Koweit. February—March, 1899.

76. On the 2nd February 1899 Colonel Meade telegraphed that the Turks had 2 months previously tried to charter a steamer to convey a considerable force to Koweit, but that the project had failed for want of sufficient money. They had now gradually increased their forces at Basrah. Colonel Meade feared that they would make an attempt against Koweit again, and therefore asked for the presence of a strong naval force with instructions to forbid an attack on Koweit.

77. In the circumstances His Excellency the Viceroy asked the Secretary of State by telegram whether he might authorize naval force in the Persian Gulf in the event of such an attack. The Secretary of State answered in the affirmative, and asked that a report might be called for from the Naval Officer

No. 623.



No. 650. Commanding on the *defensibleness, by naval force alone, of Koweit*. The naval Commander-in-Chief's opinion was that with sufficient warning to collect ships the navy alone could undertake the defence of Koweit.

78. On the 16th February the Secretary of State telegraphed again:—

No. 655. "Lord Salisbury desires to have earliest possible notice, if preparatory measures are found to be necessary for defence of Koweit against Turkish attack in order to give serious warning to Turkey before forcible measures are used on the spot, to prevent such an attack. Please arrange accordingly to obtain and send information in regard to this matter."

79. The Naval Commander-in-Chief, who was consulted, telegraphed on 1st March:—

No. 670. "No preparatory measures by the navy are necessary. I only require sufficient warning to concentrate a few ships of war at Koweit. It would simplify matters if I could be authorized to forcibly prevent the Turkish transports leaving the Shat-el-Arab."

80. This telegram was repeated to the Secretary of State. His Excellency the Viceroy added:—

No. 669. "In the event of concentration of ships being thought necessary, I shall telegraph immediate information to Your Lordship, and I think the Admiral should be authorized to stop transports provided he is satisfied regarding their destination."

81. The Secretary of State wired back on 7th March:—

No. 672. "Lord Salisbury doubts expediency of authorizing stoppage of transports until occasion arises, and in any case considers such instructions should issue from Admiralty if issued at all."

82. His Excellency the Viceroy then wired (telegram dated 8th March 1899):—

No. 673. "I had not proposed that Admiral should be instructed otherwise than by Admiralty. If authority is not to be asked or given until occasion arises, is there no danger of transports reaching destination, while we are telegraphing? Will Lord Salisbury therefore consider advisability of such instructions as may be desired by him?"

83. The Secretary of State telegraphed on 14th March:—

No. 681. "Your telegram of 8th March. Koweit. Lord Salisbury enquired what grounds exist for immediate instructions to Admiralty as proposed, since no attack is imminent. Procedure now authorised is that, when hostile action by Turks appears to be contemplated, serious warning will be addressed to Porte before protective measures are taken. Proposed instructions to Admiralty would reserve this procedure and involve risk of publicity also."

84. His Excellency then replied on 16th March:—

No. 682. "The grounds for instructions to Admiralty as proposed by me were that information reached us in February that Turkish troops had gradually been concentrated at Basrah, and were believed by Resident to be meditating early attack upon Koweit. To avert this or any similar danger in future, I suggested that general instructions should be issued from Admiralty to stop Turkish transports from starting at any time for Koweit. If no such instructions are issued in advance, the Turks may have landed there before we hear of it in India. In any case, unless British gun-boat happens to be in the port at the moment, we shall probably be too late to stop them. British Vice-Consul at Basrah has been instructed by us to telegraph immediately any probable movement of Turkish troops."

X.—(1) Question of status of the Sheikh of Koweit. (2) Turkish activity in the neighbourhood and measures adopted for the prevention of an attack on Koweit. (3) Imposition of customs duty by the Sheikh—March—June 1899.

85. In his telegram, dated 23rd March 1899, Colonel Meade reported that it was not likely that Turkey would attempt anything against Koweit, as the hot weather was beginning. But on 17th April he telegraphed that Hamid Pasha, who had been Vali of Basrah two years previously and had supported the cause of Mubarak's nephews, had been re-appointed to that place and that it was rumoured that he was going to send a battalion to Fao shortly.

Secret E., June 1899, Nos. 94-119.

86. In his letter No. 51, dated 30th April 1899, the Political Resident

No. 110 of Secret E., June 1899, Nos. 94-119.

reported that the Turks had apparently some knowledge of the British negotiations at Koweit and that this accounted for the proposed movement of troops to Fao, that though no attack on Koweit could be expected, before the autumn, it was unlikely that the Sheikh would be allowed to get his date harvest from



his gardens near Fao. He suggested that as soon as he reported about the actual move of troops to Fao, the British Ambassador should be directed to enquire what the object of the movement was, and that he should inform the Porte that we would not permit an attack to be made on Koweit, and that then the several questions about the Sheikh of Koweit could be discussed and settled diplomatically between the two Governments, namely, (1) the status of the Sheikh; (2) his right to the estates near Fao.

87. In his letter No. 58, dated 7th May 1899, Colonel Meade reported that the Vali of Basrah (Hamdi Pasha) was likely to encourage Sheikh Pasim of Katar, Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim of Dora and the Chief of Shammar to take some action against the Sheikh of Koweit, that Mubarak's nephews had gone from Zobeir to Basrah probably to push their claims to the estates in Fao before the Courts, reckoning on the sympathies of the Vali. As regards Mubarak's status, Colonel Meade thought that his acceptance of the title of Kai-Makam from the Turks could not affect his position as an independent Chief. Such a title had been held by his predecessors without their independence being affected. Colonel Meade added:—

"It would certainly have been more satisfactory if we could have come to an arrangement about Koweit in 1897, before the Sheikh was offered Turkish recognition, but I am of opinion that neither he nor his predecessors have considered that any recognition or title bestowed by the Sultan affects their independent position at Koweit itself, and that the title of Kai-Makam, when accepted, has been chiefly regarded as referring to their estates in Turkey, the possession of which is undoubtedly a source of weakness to them, as they are liable to be constantly harassed in regard to those properties by Turkish officials. They consider, probably, that the title of Kai-Makam gives them an official position in return, and enables them to meet official attacks. Sheikh Mubarak was well aware that whatever recognition he might have received from the Sultan, would be of little avail if it suited the Turks to support his nephews against him, and he himself welcomed the opportunity of obtaining our support. There is no doubt, too, that, whatever may have been done to re-assure the Sheikh by offering him recognition and a title, the Turks have, for some time, been waiting for a favourable opportunity to interfere actively in Koweit affairs, with the object of completely absorbing it in the Turkish Empire. This will be the ulterior object of their interference whatever side they take."

88. The Political Resident further proposed that, as the Turkish Government was likely to oppose the establishment of our influence, at least one gun boat should be kept at Koweit, pending settlement of the Sheikh's status. He also suggested that a secret news agent should be appointed at Koweit.

89. The Government of India approved of the last two proposals and the Military Department was directed to arrange to keep the Lapwing in the Shat-el-Arab or at Bushire for the time.

90. It was also decided that if Colonel Meade could get a reliable man to act as secret news-agent for Rs. 50 a month, he should be allowed to do so temporarily and experimentally.

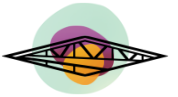
91. Sheikh Mubarak seemed anxious at the time to precipitate matters against the Porte, probably dependent upon the support of the British. About May 1899 he established a Customs Department at Koweit and imposed an import duty of 5 per cent. *ad valorem* on all goods arriving at the port, including goods from Basrah and other Turkish ports, which had been previously exempted from duty on presentation of a certificate from the Turkish Custom Houses. Colonel Meade in reporting this fact (letter No. 62, dated 14th May 1899) expressed fears that the Sheikh's action might precipitate some move against him on the part of the Turks. It was, however, believed that the Porte would first incite the chiefs of Shammar and Katar and other Arab Chiefs to make raids against Koweit and then herself interfere as peace-maker to the detriment of Koweit.

No. 114 of Secret E., June 1899, Nos. 94-119.

92. In submitting Colonel Meade's letters Nos. 51, 58 and 63 referred to above, the Government of India observed (Despatch No. 101, dated 1st June 1899)—

No. 116 of Secret E., June 1894, Nos. 94-110.

1899)—



"We remit for the decision of Her Majesty's Government, Lieutenant-Colonel Mead's suggestion that diplomatic action should be taken with a view to an early understanding with the Porte in respect to the status of Koweit. The position at Basrah appears to be such that, should no understanding of this nature be arrived at, serious complications may at no distant date ensue between the Local Turkish authorities and ourselves".

XI.—Turkish attempts to exercise sovereign rights in Koweit by appointing a harbour master and opening a custom house. A forward Turkish policy advocated. The British Government's protest, July—September 1899.

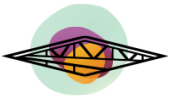
93. The point referred to in the Government of India's despatch last quoted was referred to the British Ambassador at Constantinople.

94. Further reports received, however, from the Consul at Basrah induced Sir N. O'Connor (No. 328, dated the 5th July 1899) to think it possible that the Sultan might himself broach the subject of Koweit; and he suggested that in that case, while avoiding as far as possible a definite statement respecting the independence of Koweit, he might say that it would be a satisfactory arrangement for both England and Turkey if the Sultan would agree not to cede any of his rights in those parts to other power. This proposal was approved, subject to a limitation proposed by the India Office (18th July 1899) that nothing should be said which might hamper us giving effect to our obligations under the Koweit Agreement (to Sir N. O'Connor, dated 25th July 1899).

95. Before, however, this permission could be acted upon, reports were received from the Consul at Basrah, that the Turks had appointed a harbour master to Koweit; that Sheikh had declined to receive him; that a renewed attempt to appoint a native of Koweit as harbour master had been ordered from Constantinople; and that the Turkish military authorities were advocating strong measures. It was also rumoured that the Turks proposed to establish a custom house at Koweit and open a telegraph line from Fao to Katif through Koweit.

96. The India Office (7th September 1899) in view of the embarrassment which might be caused by acquiescence in such an exercise of the rights of sovereignty by the Porte, recommended to the Foreign Office that Turkish Government should be informed that Her Majesty's Government had entered into engagements with the Sheikh of Koweit as an independent ruler, and were not disposed to recognise any infringement of his independence; or, at least, that it should be intimated that the authority of no Turkish official at Koweit should be recognised. The Foreign Office thereupon instructed Sir N. O'Connor to warn the Porte at once that, while Her Majesty's Government *had themselves no designs on Koweit, they had friendly relations with the Sheikh; and that a very inconvenient and disagreeable question would be raised if an attempt were made to establish Turkish authority or customs control of Koweit without previous agreement with Her Majesty's Government.* At the same time they requested the Admiralty to send a ship to Koweit to protect the Sheikh against overt acts of aggression by the Turkish authorities; but, on receipt of a telegram from Sir N. O'Connor representing the inexpediency of this latter step in the existing circumstances, H. M. S. *Sphinx* was ordered merely to call at Koweit and proceed without making any stay.

97. In his despatch No. 440 of the 13th September 1899, Sir N. O'Connor reported that he had carried out his instructions, and had received an assurance from the Minister for Foreign Affairs that no further attempt would be made to insist upon the appointment of the harbour master; that the Ottoman Government had no intention of establishing a custom house at Koweit; and that the despatch of a military expedition was not in contemplation, as, though such an expedition had been proposed by the Vali, the Sultan did not consider it worth the risk or expense.



98. In a despatch written on the next day, Sir N. O'Connor reported that it had been represented to him by Anthopoulos Pasha that the Sultan was much disturbed by his (Sir N. O'Connor's) language with regard to Koweit, which appeared to indicate a desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to interfere with His Majesty's liberty of action in Turkish territory. Sir N. O'Connor replied that it would be better to leave no door open for misunderstanding, and he repeated his language of the previous day, emphasising the points that Her Majesty's Government had no aggressive intentions in those parts, and that it depended on the Ottoman Government not to raise an intricate and unpleasant question without necessity. He added that Her Majesty's Government were in most friendly relations with the Sheikh of Koweit and could not pass without notice any hostile action taken against him; but he avoided the direct issue of the territorial dependency of the Sheikh.

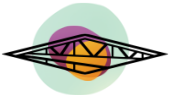
99. In a further despatch Sir N. O'Connor reported that he had had a further conversation with Tewfik Pasha, in which he again impressed upon the Foreign Minister the desirability of not now raising a question about Koweit, reminding him that in 1883 Lord Granville had informed Rustom Pasha that the Turkish right of sovereignty over the Katar Coast had never been admitted by Her Majesty's Government. Tewfik Pasha agreed in considering it inexpedient to raise this awkward question. The language held by Sir N. O'Connor was approved by Her Majesty's Government.

100. In his despatch No. 434 of the 13th September, Sir N. O'Connor reported the steps taken by the Consul at Basrah in fulfilment of the promise that Her Majesty's Government would do what they could to protect the estates of the Koweit Chiefs at Fao. Mr. Wratislaw had on the 26th July, in accordance with instructions conveyed to him by Sir N. O'Connor in July, expressed to the Vali a hope that an equitable settlement would soon be arrived at of the rival claims of Sheikh Mubarak and of the sons of the late Sheikh, it being a matter in regard to which Her Majesty's Government were not indifferent. From the conversation which followed, it appeared that Mubarak had made totally inadequate proposals; and the Consul was of opinion that he had been treated by the Porte with "surprising" tenderness, considering that he had declined to submit to the jurisdiction of the Turkish Courts, within which the estates in question undoubtedly lie, and had for three years appropriated the whole of the revenues. The Consul, notwithstanding his instructions, had not thought it opportune on this occasion to warn the Vali against taking hostile action against Mubarak till indications of the necessity of such a warning, which were not then apparent, should present themselves. The warning was subsequently delivered to the Vali on the 8th September 1899.

XII—Sheikh Mubarak's diffidence in British and his desire of Persian protection.

September—October 1899.

101. In a telegram dated 4th October 1899 Mr. Wratislaw informed Sir N. O'Connor that the Turkish Consul at Bushire had informed the Vali of Basrah about an application made by the Sheikh of Koweit through the Sheikh of Mohammerah to be taken under Persian protection, but that his application has been rejected. This news was confirmed from other reliable sources. The Sheikh of Koweit also wrote to his friend the British Agent at Bahrein that he had no great confidence in the efficacy of our support and knowing that the Turks were hostile to him, he had applied through the Sheikh of Mohammerah, be taken under the wing of the Shah. Possibly this move of the Sheikh was made as a feeler to see how far the British would come to his protection. He was at the same time coquetting with the Porte as will be seen from the narrative below.



XII.—Appointment of Mohsin Pasha as Vali of Basrah. Change of policy inaugurated. Turkish Decoration for Sheikh Mubarak. 1899.

102. In his despatch dated 16th September Mr. Wratishaw reported that Mubarak had then turned his attention to intrigues with the Nakib of Basrah and Mohsin Pasha, the Military Commander, against Hamdi Pasha, the Vali, which ultimately resulted in the dismissal of the latter, and the promotion of Mohsin to be Vali of Basrah. This change took place about the middle of the year 1899; Mohsin Pasha professed to be a friend of Sheikh Mubarak. He dropped all the projects of his predecessor Hamdi Pasha—which were distasteful to the Sheikh—*viz*, the appointment of harbour master, the establishment of effective quarantine and of a custom house, and the extension of the telegraphic line from Fao to Katif, which would pass through Koweit. The Sheikh on the representation of the Mohsin Pasha pointing out the correctness of this attitude during recent visits of Russian and British ships—was given by the Sultan the rank of Mir Miran (Pasha). It was also said that the Turkish Government had fixed 150 Karas (1 Kara about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons) of dates as his yearly subsidy, and that five years' allowance at this rate would be given him forthwith.

103. Mohsin Pasha was an astute and bold statesman, and pursued the clever policy of gaining a hold on the Sheikh by conciliatory measures and proving to him that the Porte was his best friend, and thus weaning him from British influence. He cleverly fomented the hostilities between the Sheikh and Ibn Rashid and played them one against the other and when they were about to rush to arms or actually did so, intervened on behalf of the Porte as mediator and as the price of his mediation, got them to acknowledge themselves as vassals and even as slaves of the Sultan.

XIV.—Visit of the German Railway Commission to Koweit and their scheme to make Katham their Railway's Terminus. January 1900.

104. In September 1899 Sir N. O'Connor informed the Foreign Office that a Commission of experts had been appointed by the Anatolian Railway Company for surveying the route for their projected Railway from Koweit to the Persian Gulf, and for reporting on the topographical features and commercial prospects of the country through which the Railway would pass. The Commission arrived at Constantinople in the early part of September 1899.

No. 176.

105. On 6th January 1900 Mr. Wratishaw telegraphed that the German Railway Commission had arrived at Basrah and was to leave in a few days for Koweit, where they proposed to select a site for a railway terminus, conducting negotiations not with the Sheikh, but with the Sultan of Turkey.

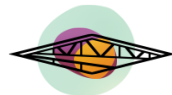
106. In reporting this message to the Secretary of State, His Excellency the Viceroy observed in this telegram dated 7th January—

"Such a proceeding would be inconsistent with our claims as regards Koweit, and would certainly produce local trouble between Sheikh and ourselves, and possibly subsequent friction with Germany. Would it not be desirable to inform Germany of our relations with Koweit? Any idea of prolonging German railway thither should only be carried out with our consent, and as part of specific understanding. An arrangement with Turkey over our heads would stultify recent Koweit Agreement, concluded by orders of Her Majesty's Government, and our position in the Gulf would be greatly weakened."

No. 179.

107. On 8th January the same news was repeated by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and again on 9th June he telegraphed :—

"Resident in Turkish Arabia has informed me that he understands Herr Stemrich German Consul-General, leader of Railway Commission, does not consider financial prospect good, and that Chief Engineer with party states that accomplishment of scheme depends on acquisition of Koweit. Melvill heard that one of the principal objects of Commission going to Basrah is to ascertain if Mubarak will favour project, and, if so, on what terms, but Stemrich told Wratishaw that they are dealing with Sultan of Turkey and do not see how Mubarak



comes in. Visit of the Commission to Koweit will probably cause complications, as Sheikh will either forbid it and Turkish escort to enter Koweit, or he may be bought over to give site for the terminus of railway in violation of the agreement. Wratislaw will telegraph when Commission leaves Basrah."

103. The Government of India in their telegram, No. 101 E. A., dated the No. 180. 11th January 1900, instructed the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf :—

"Your telegram No. 4. There does not seem to be any sufficient reason for prohibition by Sheikh of visit of Germans to Koweit. But you should tell him in advance that, if they propose any arrangement to him whatsoever, he should not accept without reference to you and should abide by decision of Government of India. If you think that Sheikh will be reassured by presence of man-of-war, you may send one. But there is no need for you to go at present yourself."

109. The Secretary of State telegraphed the views of Her Majesty's Gov- No. 181. ernment on 11th January 1900 :—

"Your telegram of the 7th of January. Koweit. Lord Salisbury considers the moment inopportune for the proposed communication to the German Government. He prefers waiting until Germany shows immediate intention of addressing Turkey, when we can either renew previous warning given to Porte, or come to terms with Germany as to terminus of railway."

110. On the 12th Colonel Meade telegraphed (No. 17) that he was going to No. 186. send the message to Mubarak by the Commander of the *Melpomene* and send also Mr. Gaskin to interpret.

111. On 15th January Colonel Meade reported in his telegram No. 17 that No. 187. the *Melpomene* had returned, that the Sheikh had promised to abide by our advice, and that the Germans had left Basrah on 18th January.

112. In his telegram, No. 18, dated the 16th January 1900, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf communicated further interesting news :—

"Since despatching my telegram No. 17 yesterday, I have seen Captain Denison who pointed out great importance of Kathama Bay, western end of Koweit harbour, which is sheltered from the prevailing winds and has deep water close to the shore. He considers that it is the best harbour in the Gulf, and could be made good naval and military station. German Railway Commission propose to have their terminus railway at this place, and if Germany is established there under Turkish auspices, it will be difficult to dispossess her later on. We think, therefore, Sheikh should assert his authority and refuse to allow Mission without permission of the Government of India, to establish themselves there, make any survey or take other step which they may assert hereafter as proof of possession and authority of Turkey over Koweit. Under these circumstances, should Captain Denison return to Koweit with further instructions for the Sheikh?"

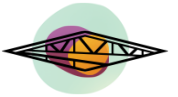
113. On 16th January the Naval Commander-in-Chief received a telegram from Captain Denison that the Germans had gone to secure Kathama Bay as terminus of their Railway, which they intended to acquire *direct from the Turks ignoring the Sheikh*. He considered Kathama Bay in every respect the best harbour in the Persian Gulf, and thought that it should not be lost to England, as it could be made a most important naval and military station.

114. The views of Captain Denison were telegraphed to the Secretary of No. 190. State and His Excellency the Viceroy aided:

"Meade fears some act on the part of the Turks and Germans combined, which may afterwards be claimed as proof of Turkish authority or possession over Koweit. I have acquainted Colonel Meade with views of Her Majesty's Government as stated in your telegram of 11th January. But it appears to me very likely that some such action as he fears may force our hands?"

115. Under instructions from the Government of India, Mr. Gaskin was sent to Koweit to enquire and ascertain the facts connected with the visit of the Commission. Mr. Gaskin had an interview with the Sheikh on 20th January, and an account of the interview is given in his report of 5th February :—

"On Monday morning I landed and had a long interview with Sheikh Mubarak. He informed me that the German Mission on reaching Jehara, a village about 4 farsakhs from Koweit, and situated about a mile to the interior of the west shore of Kathama Bay, wrote him two letters informing him of their approach and asking for an interview with him. That he sent no replies to these letters and on the 19th instant at about 1 p. m. the German Mission entered Koweit, and he provided them with a house, and entertainment as his guests. That the party was composed of Mr. Stemrich, and German Consul-General at Constantinople; Mr. Von Kapp, the Surveyor; an Engineer, and an interpreter, with about eight servants. They were accompanied by a lad named Abdul Karim bin Hussain Al Mishri, a native of Basrah; but they had no Turkish escort, and brought no letters from the Porte, or the Walis of Basrah, and Bagdad, and had only a letter of introduction from the Commander-in-Chief at Bagdad. That during the afternoon he had a friendly and brief visit from them and they



called on him again at night and he received them in the presence of some of the principal men of Koweit. They explained to those present the nature of their intentions as regards the extension of the railway to Koweit, the facilities it would afford to trade, the development of the place, and the general benefit it would be to every one. That on the following morning early they had a confidential interview with him. They told him they had a concession from the Sultan of Turkey to build railways in his dominions, the Sultan has vast vested interest in the concern, and has guaranteed it, *to make it a success they desire to extend the line of Kathama Bay, they wanted to buy Kathama right out, and obtain on lease Chawai-chib and Al Aghthi*; that their present visit was only for the purpose of conveying to him the German Ambassador's greetings and, to try and come to some understanding as regards the land mentioned, they wished to obtain his co-operation and support, and they also desire him to use his friendly influence with the numerous Arab Sheikhs, through whose territories, in the Euphrates valley, the line will pass, and induce them to co-operate with the Company as they believed he had authority and influence over them. That would be handsomely paid for any land purchased, and leased, and that they will satisfy the petty tribes and Sheikhs who claim the lands for grazing purposes. That the trade of the place will increase extensively, and consequently his revenue will improve considerably, and the value of property will go up twenty-fold. That the place will become the centre of trade, in fact another Bombay, and that there will be plenty of work for everybody. That a line of large merchant vessels will be established to feed the railway, and for conveyance of cargo and passengers. That if he comes to an arrangement with the Railway Company and agrees to their proposals he and his successors will have the support of Germany, both by land and water, and a man-of-war will be stationed at the place for its protection.

Sheikh Mubarak declared that, in reply, he told them that he did not understand whether they had come on their own account or on behalf of the Sultan, if on behalf of the Sultan, then he would have given them a letter to him. That he desired them to understand that he only acknowledged the Sultan of Turkey as the head of the Mahomedan world, and does not consider himself a subject of Turkey, and does not acknowledge Turkish sovereignty over Koweit territory; and if any demands are made to him by the Sultan they will be rejected. That, on the other hand, neither he or the Arabs wish foreigners to obtain a footing in their territory, and he will not agree to their proposals as the Arabs will not consent to their plains and grazing grounds being absorbed by foreigners for a railway, also he could not guarantee the safety of the line, or be responsible for any bloodshed as the Arabs are a free and an independent people. As regards his using his influence over the other Arab Sheikhs, he told them that his nominal authority was limited to the district of Koweit, and he had no influence or authority over the Arab Chiefs in the Euphrates valley, he therefore cannot help them.

Sheikh Mubarak further stated that after hearing his reply the Germans told him that they were very anxious to come to an amicable understanding with him, and obtain his friendly support, that they were returning overland to Constantinople, to arrange matters, and from there, the German Ambassador will either communicate by letter to him the final terms they wish to make, or else depute a special person to arrange terms with him.

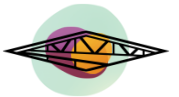
The German finally offered him presents, which he refused saying that he never accepted presents from guests."

115-A. *Vide* Appendix E, as to the communication made at Constantinople about the British policy. A complete account of the progress of the projected German Railway will be found in the *Precis of Turkish Arabia*.

XV.—Proposal to make Koweit a Port of call for Mail steamers, July 1900—June 1901.

116. In July 1900 an attempt was made to establish a weekly call at Koweit of the British India Company's steamers. Mr. Lyle, an Agent of Messrs. Gray Mackenzie and Co., of Basrah, was well received by the Sheikh, who made however, the important stipulation that the call of steamers should not bring with it the establishment of quarantine. The Turkish authorities, who were paying much attention to Koweit, would almost certainly enforce at that place, as at Basrah, a ten days' quarantine against arrivals from all ports other than Turkish. It was generally agreed that this extension of quarantine would both be ruinous to the trade of Koweit and undesirable as increasing the influence of Turkey in the Gulf. Colonel Kemball further pointed out that, in the event of Her Majesty's Government making successful representations to the Porte against a quarantine for Koweit, the Sheikh would be subjected to a general system of reprisals and his town treated as a foreign port (a similar difficulty having already presented itself in connection with the Sheikh's property in Turkish territory).

117. The question was solved for the moment by the Sheikh withdrawing his consent to the scheme. The withdrawal was not, however, conveyed in very decided terms, the compulsion of extraneous influence was apparent, and it seemed to Lieutenant-Colonel Kemball that his objections would be removed at a future date.



118. In June 1901 the Sheikh intimated that he was now favourable to the scheme. It was accordingly arranged that the mail steamers should call at Koweit on the upward voyage from Bombay to Basrah. The quarantine officials at first imposed certain restrictions but their objections were not of as serious a character as had been anticipated, and they were not maintained.*

XVI.—Threatened hostilities between the Sheikh of Koweit and the Amir of Nejd.

August—November 1900.

119 Affairs at Koweit tended to become further complicated by its connection with the disturbances in the interior of Arabia. Sheikh Mubarak being aware that Abdul Aziz-bin-Rashid, the Amir of Nejd, had espoused the cause of his enemy, the rebel Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim, and his nephews, the sons of Mahomed-bin-Sabaha, was not likely to neglect any opportunity which might arise, whereby the authority and influence of the Amir might be weakened. Such an opportunity was at hand in the person of Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal of the Saud dynasty, the former rulers at Riyadh, who were dispossessed by Mahomed-bin-Rashid, uncle of the present Amir, in 1886; and now that his hands were strengthened by the friendship of the British Government, he made up his mind to avail himself of the opportunity. Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal had been living in Koweit under Sheikh Mubarak's protection for some years, and, it is said, was in receipt of monthly allowances both from Sheikh Mubarak and the Turkish Government. In August 1900, Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal is said to have received a letter from his adherents in Nejd, expressing their readiness to espouse his cause should he make a move to recover his lost authority. Abdul Rahman accordingly moved out of Koweit. It appears that he soon gained some slight successes over certain divisions of the Shammar tribes owing allegiance to Abdul Aziz Ibn Rashid and he then wrote to Sheikh Mubarak, asking him to send him reinforcements. His request was complied with, and acting under Mubarak's directions, the Bedouin tribes owing him allegiance assembled to support Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal.

120. Early in October a report was received at Simla from Colonel Kemball that raids had been made on Nejd territory by Sheikh Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal. In October 1900, it was reported that fighting seemed probable in the neighbourhood of Koweit, and it was proposed to send Colonel Kemball to Koweit to report and to warn the Sheikh against action likely to cause interference by the Turks. Her Majesty's Government approved of this proposal. Colonel Kemball's report dated 3rd November showed that Mubarak was absent from Koweit when he arrived, and that his son came off to meet Colonel Kemball in a boat flying the Turkish flag. Colonel Kemball was, therefore, unable to deliver the proposed warning. He learnt from him the facts narrated above about Abdul Rahman's and his father's movements. About this time another raid on Abdul Aziz's people was made by Sadun, another friend of Mubarak's, and, to all appearances, as part of the latter's general plan of campaign. This Sadun Pasha (he had received from the Sultan a rank bearing the title of Pasha) was nephew of the late Nasir Pasha, formally Sheikh of the Muntefik Arabs, to whose devotion to the Turkish cause was due the final submission of his tribes to the Sultan. He created the town of Nasriye, and died Vali of Basrah. Sadun himself, was a confirmed rogue, and lived mainly by robbery. His last raid on Abdul Aziz's tribes was a great success and resulted in considerable booty. Followed by Abdul Aziz with a large force, and worsted in an encounter which appears, however, to have been only a petty skirmish, he retired with his men and most of his loot to Turkish territory.

* The subject will be treated in more detail in the *Précis of Communications and Postal Arrangements*.



121. Abdul Aziz, taking what was obviously the correct course, proceeded to the nearest Telegraph Office, at Suk-es-Shuyukh, and, put himself into communication with the Vali of Basrah, to whom he complained of the misdeeds of Sadun, a Turkish subject, and demanded redress. This Mohsin Pasha promised with alacrity, but he does not seem to have taken any energetic steps to carry out his undertaking. Sadun was said at the time to have fled into the marshes, but from his subsequent movements, it is evident that he could have retired to any very great distance from the desert path to Koweit. After some days' fruitless waiting, Abdul Aziz got impatient and threatened that, unless the Wali procured him immediate satisfaction, he would proceed forthwith to Koweit, and take it out of Mubarak, whom he regarded as the real author of the attacks made on him.

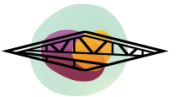
122. The main facts were telegraphed by Mr. de Bunsen to London on the 1st November, with a recommendation that a gunboat should go to Koweit to watch events. A previous telegram from Consul Shipley had reported matters at Koweit to be quiet and hostilities suspended; and a subsequent message (dated 2nd November) from Mr. de Bunsen withdrew his recommendation on the ground that the situation had improved, and that the Amir had promised to remain quiet pending settlement of his claims by an Imperial Commissioner. On the 9th November, therefore, the India Office recommended to the Foreign Office that no further action should be taken for the present; but a less reassuring account of the state of affairs having been received from the Admiralty on the following day (10th November), the India Office again addressed the Foreign Office (14th November), suggesting that a British Agent should be sent in a ship of war to ascertain the true state of affairs and to endeavour to warn the Amir of Nejd that no attack on Koweit would be allowed. It was further suggested that should it prove impossible to resist a land attack with the force available at the moment, the Sheikh should be offered a refuge and steps taken as soon as possible to repulse the invaders. Further news was received on the same day that an attack on Koweit by the Amir of Nejd was considered improbable, but possible; and that the Turks were reinforcing their garrison at Basrah. The Foreign Office agreed to the despatch of a gunboat, but added that no active measures should be taken without further reference to Her Majesty's Government. The Government of India were then instructed in Secretary of State's telegram dated 15th November 1900—

"Foreign Office are informing Admiralty that vessel should be detailed to take an Agent to Koweit to enquire state of affairs and endeavour to warn Nejd Amir, if necessary, not to attack Koweit. Preliminary steps will be taken by Admiralty to protect Sheikh if attacked, but no active measures for this purpose will be taken and no force landed to expel invader without further reference to Her Majesty's Government. I presume you will inform Naval Commander-in-Chief and send Resident, Bushire."

123. Meanwhile Mubarak's warlike preparations had been completed, and he proceeded to march northwards to meet Abdul Aziz. Thalib Pasha was then again despatched by the Vali of Basrah in hot haste to hold him back, but found he had already started. At the same time reinforcements were sent to the Turkish troops in the Muntefik district, both from Basrah and Bagdad, and Saiyid Ahmed Pasha was sent along with Ali Bessam, the Amir's Basrah Agent, to see Abdul Aziz, and do their best to induce him to go home, and leave his grievances in the hands of the Turks.

124. Sadun was now at Sakria, and Abdul Aziz near Samaya in the Vilayet of Bagdad. The forces of Mubarak and Sadun effected a junction without much difficulty, and once united were equal, if not slightly superior in number, to the troops Abdul Aziz then had on the spot. This consideration, joined to the presence of a considerable Turkish force ready to intervene, if necessary, put additional weight to the Vali's arguments in favour of peace; for, in Arab warfare, it is customary to force on a battle only when in overwhelming numbers, and in this case the inferior side usually anticipates the fray by a timely retreat. Anyhow, both parties agreed to return home, the Amir making the first move. Mubarak was accompanied on his homeward journey by the Mutessarif of Muntefik just to see him safe off the premises, and through this official, an interview was arranged between Mubarak

Political Resident's telegram dated 14th November 1900, No. 42 of Secret E., February 1901, Nos. 22-107.



and Mohsin Pasha. This took place at the Nakib's residence near Zobair on the 17th November 1900, and during the course of it, Mohsin was able to persuade the Sheikh to return to Basrah with him the same night. Next day they were for several hours at the Telegraph Office, communicating with Constantinople, and early on the 19th Mubarak started again for Koweit.

No. 52 of Proc. cited.

125. It should be added that, at their interview outside the town, the Vali presented Mubarak with the insignia of the Mejidi, 2nd Class, which the Sultan recently conferred on him as a reward for the tact and loyalty he displayed in the reception at Koweit of British and Russian men-of-war. It was also reported that according to the latest advices, the Arab levies on both sides had been gradually dispersing. The bulk of his forces were behind, under the command of his son, and some anxiety was felt at first lest they should make a treacherous attack on Abdul Aziz's men, as they journeyed homewards.

126. The only person who had distinctly scored throughout these events was the Vali, Mohsin Pasha, who had triumphantly asserted the Sultan's authority over the two chief men in Arabia, and had averted an ugly crisis by a few promises, which it would cost nothing to break. He had induced Mubarak to pay his promised visit to Basrah, an event which His Excellency informed Mr. Wratislaw, in a moment of expansion, he never hoped to bring off.

127. "Abdul Aziz's prestige" Mr. Wratislaw thought, "cannot but suffer from his failure to exact vengeance from Mubarak and Sadun. Indeed, if he sits down tamely and pockets the affront, he can hardly hope to maintain his position as Paramount Sheikh in Arabia. But this he is hardly likely to do, and a renewal of hostilities may be expected later on."

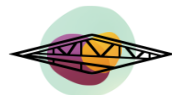
128. Mubarak had put himself to much expense and trouble in organising and equipping a large army, and yet, at the bidding of the Vali, he had returned to Koweit without striking a blow. By this visit here he had once allowed the Turks to assert their suzerainty over Koweit, which, indeed, in his correspondence with the Valis and the Sultan since his accession to the Sheikhship he had constantly admitted. Mohsin Pasha, informed Mr. Wratislaw's dragoman that, while in Basrah, Mubarak had assured the Sultan that he was His Imperial Majesty's most faithful servant, and that it was solely in obedience to his orders that he had withdrawn his force without attacking the Amir. He had further undertaken to cease coquetting with "Foreign Powers."

129. One of the conditions on which the Amir of Nejd was induced by the Vali of Basrah to withdraw was that Sadun Pasha should be hunted down and satisfaction should be obtained from both Sadun and Mubarak for the raids made into his territory. It was reported that late in November Major General Mahomed Pasha, Daghestanli, was sent to conduct operations against Sadun, and actually captured him. But Sadun soon after escaped or perhaps was allowed to escape.

No. 75 of Secret E., February 1901, Nos. 22-107.

130. The instructions of the Secretary of State that Colonel Kemball should visit Koweit were duly communicated to him by telegram, but on 19th November he telegraphed that the Koweit crisis was over and both sides were on their way home. He therefore presumed that his visit was not necessary, and asked for instructions. The Secretary of State however still wished that Colonel Kemball should proceed to Koweit, as arranged, since the Sheikh had been absent on his previous visit and he could learn the result of the Sheikh's visit to Basrah, Colonel Kemball however deprecated a visit at this time since Mr. Wratislaw was thoroughly posted as to the facts connected with the Sheikh's visit to Basrah. He also added:—

"Although crisis is passed for present, there is no doubt that Amir of Nejd has considerable grievance against Mubarak, and I fear my visit in ship-of-war to Koweit will unduly encourage Sheikh to think he can do what he likes and that he will receive our protection.



Visit two months hence would not be open to objection, but at present, for above reasons as well as recent interest shown by Turkey in Koweit, think that visit inadvisable, and might also embarrass Sheikh."

131. This view—concurred in by His Excellency the Viceroy—was telegraphed to the Secretary of State, and was accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

XVII.—Renewal of hostilities between the Sheikh of Koweit and the Amir of Nejd, December 1900—May 1901.

132. Reporting on Koweit affairs on 3rd December 1900, Colonel Kemball No. 74 of Secret E., February 1901, Nos. 22—107. anticipated that both Ibn Rashid and Sheikh Mubarak would not sit quiet, but resume hostilities at an early date. It was doubtful whether Ibn Rashid would tamely submit to the affronts and injuries he had been recently subjected to. On the other hand Sheikh Mubarak knew that the Amir had espoused the cause of his enemy Yusuf and his nephews, and there was little doubt that he would continue to side with Abdul Rahman bin Feysal and Sheikh Sadun and assist them in their attacks on the Amir of Nejd.

Colonel Kemball also observed :—

"Our position is, it seems to me, a very difficult one. We are not called on to interfere between Sheikh Mubarak and the Amir of Nejd; indeed, it would appear that, considering our relations with Sheikh Mubarak, it would be to our interest to see his authority placed on a firmer basis. On the other hand, we desire that the Chief of Koweit should avoid any display of activity, which would give Turkey an excuse for a greater degree of interference in the affairs of Koweit. We clearly cannot give Mubarak any assistance to enable him to prosecute his warlike operations, and I think that all we can do is to convey to him a warning that, although our agreement with him gives us an interest in seeing the integrity of Koweit maintained, we cannot interfere to protect him against the Amir of Nejd who, it appears, has undoubtedly received considerable provocation at his hands. We further counsel him to keep quiet, and not give the Turks cause for interfering more actively in the affairs of his country. I do not believe that he would, in his present state of confidence, accept this advice, but I can suggest no other course of action. In my opinion, for the present at any rate, my visit to Koweit would not be advisable."

133. On the 10th December Colonel Kemball wrote to Sheikh Mubarak advising him not to take steps which would cause others to exercise a more active interference in the affairs of his country. He added.—"It seems to me that you are pursuing a dangerous policy by continuing to provoke the Amir of Nejd and I again counsel you to keep quiet." The Sheikh was also given to understand that it was not probable that the British Government would give him assistance in the shape of guns to enable him to prosecute his warlike schemes against Ibn Rashid.

134. The news-agent at Koweit was also instructed to convey a message to the Sheikh from the Political Resident to the effect that he should keep quiet. But the Sheikh stated in reply that so long as Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim remained with Ibn Rashid in Nejd he would not keep quiet but instigate Ibn Rashid to attack Koweit. The Sheikh therefore thought that it would not be prudent to stay in Koweit and that he should proceed for the protection of his tribes.

135. Meanwhile alarming news of the impending hostilities had reached London, and the Secretary of State, on the suggestion* of the Foreign Office, telegraphed to the Viceroy on 26th February :—

"It is desirable to avoid renewal of hostilities between Sheikh Koweit and Amir of Nejd. No. 65 of Secret E., March 1901, Nos. 57-63. Kemball should now visit Koweit, ascertain the resources of Sheikh, position of affairs, counsel avoidance of war. If he finds Sheikh is intractable, he can point out Agreement of 1899 giving British Government right to expect that their advice will be followed, and he can inform Sheikh that he must report position for the orders of Government. It is advisable to arrange with Naval Commander-in-Chief to have ships ready to proceed to Koweit pending final settlement of affairs."



136. The Viceroy replied that from the correspondence referred to above, it would be seen that the advice to keep quiet had already been given by Colonel Kemball to the Sheikh and declined by the latter.

137. As had been anticipated, hostilities were soon renewed between Ibn Rashid and Sheikh Mubarak and his partisans. On the 3rd January 1901. Consul Wratisslaw reported to Mr. de Bunsen, that from letters received from the Sheikh, it appeared that Abdur Rahman had attacked Abdul Aziz's men and defeated them but that information from Nejd sources denied the truth of this and pointed to a movement of Abdul Aziz's forces towards Koweit.

138. Sheikh Mubarak appears to have finally left Koweit at the commencement of the month of February leaving behind Jaber, his son, in charge of the administration. He took with him Abdur Rahman bin Feysul and Abdul's son, Abdul Aziz, and a large number of tribesmen, who had sided with Abdul Rahman. On the 12th February they were reported to be within one day's march of Riyadh. That town was captured about the middle of the month of February and all the tribes of Nejd having tendered their submission, Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Feysul was installed as Governor of Riyadh. Sheikh Hamud's sons, cousins of Ibn Rashid, also sued for peace. From Riyadh, Sheikh Mubarak marched against Hayil, and met Ibn Rashid in battle, but was utterly defeated. It was reported at first that he had been killed. When the Secretary of State heard this report, he ordered that Colonel Kemball should proceed at once to Koweit to ascertain facts, and in case the report proved true he should report on it. A telegram sent by the Consul at Basrah to Sir N. O'Connor proposed that we should conclude an agreement with Jaber, who would probably succeed Mubarak, supposed to have been killed.

139. Before Colonel Kemball left for Koweit, news reached him that Mubarak had returned to Koweit on the 31st March. Colonel Kemball left for Koweit on 13th April by the "Lawrence" and had an interview with Mubarak. The Sheikh gave him a confused account of the fighting and wished him to believe that he had defeated Ibn Rashid. But Colonel Kemball observes—

"As to Sheikh Mubarak's account of the fighting it is impossible to credit it. There is absolutely no doubt that he had received a severe check, and in all probability his forces had been defeated and dispersed. The following account of the fighting which I obtained while at Koweit through a source which I believe to be fairly reliable may be of interest :—

After Mubarak had penetrated as far as Riyadh and Aridh, he appears to have received promises of assistance from certain of the Bedouin tribes under the Amir of Nejd, and further to have come to an understanding with Rabeda, the Chief of the Aneyza, who, with the people of Boreyda, promised to assist him in case of need. Thus encouraged he set out for Hayil, having with him some 5,000 men, not including the Bedouins belonging to Ibn Rashid who had joined him. When he arrived within a short distance of Hayil, he was attacked by the Amir of Nejd on the 25th Zilkada, corresponding to the 17th March. The fight, it is said, lasted only about an hour and a half when Sheikh Mubarak was defeated, the Bedouins of Nejd who were with Sheikh Mubarak promptly seizing the occasion to turn round and plunder his camp. The Amir followed in pursuit, but desisted on the appearance on the scene of Rabeda with 400 horsemen to assist Sheikh Mubarak. Ibn Rashid then proceeded to Boreyda, where it is said that he seized Rabeda, and killed him and his son, and inflicted a fine of 30,000 dollars on the place. The casualties on Mubarak's side are said to have been very heavy, some 2,000 having been killed in action or subsequently perished in the desert; while on the Amir's side about 400 are said to have been killed, including his brother Talal, two of his cousins and some of his principal Chiefs. Mubarak's brother Hamud and his cousin Khalifah-bin-Abdullah Sabah were also among the killed. It is impossible to vouch for the accuracy of the account given above, but I believe it to be more reliable than the account given to me by Sheikh Mubarak who, as will be shown below, is obviously interested in keeping secret the extent of his disaster. Mubarak arrived in Koweit on the 31st March, while of the 1,200 persons who are said to have originally accompanied him out of Koweit itself only a few, amounting, it is said, to 103 persons, had returned to Koweit at the time of my visit. Abdur Rahman bin Feysul is said to be in Koweit, though Mubarak told me he was out side the town, while Sheikh Sadun with about 700 men is in camp about 10 miles distant from Koweit".

140. Mohsin Pasha had remained comparatively inactive since his diplomatic success of November, but the defeat of Mubarak now brought on Turkish interference in a more acute form. A Turkish Field Marshal (Mohamed Pasha)



left Baghdad for Basrah on the 19th April, followed on the next day by Turkish troops. It was generally believed that the Ottoman Government intended to make use of force with a view to the deposition of Mubarak.

141. A British gun-boat the "*Sphinx*" was ordered to Koweit, and Sir N. O'Connor was definitely authorised, in the event of hostilities being resumed, to warn the Porte "to refrain from any action against the Sheikh in view of our arrangement with him."

142. But the astute policy of Mohsin Pasha again prevented matters from coming to a head. The Turkish Field Marshal stopped short of Koweit, and the Vali himself, with a small escort, paid a friendly visit to the Sheikh on 19th May. He was unable to enforce proposals for the establishment of a Turkish garrison, but Mubarak accompanied him to Fao, renewed his protestations to the Sultan, and returned to Koweit after a second act of apparently spontaneous loyalty. This happened on 25th—26th May.

143. So far as the Amir was concerned the crisis was now passed. The Turkish Government guided by the advice of Vali Mohsin Pasha, gave no encouragement to the Amir. Disgusted with the Turks, the Amir sought British protection, while Sheikh Mubarak requested through the commander of the "*Sphinx*" that the British Government should assume permanent protectorate over Koweit as soon as possible. We shall treat of these matters in the next section (see Colonel Kembell's telegram dated 1st June 1901).

No. 217 of Proceedings cited.

XVIII.—(1) Ibn Rashid seeks British Protection. (2) Sheikh Mubarak asks for assumption of permanent British protectorate over Koweit.

May—June 1901.

144. In May 1901 overtures were made to Mr. Wratishlaw on behalf of Ibn Rashid. He sent envoy by name Fahad Fashe, who sent a message to Mr. Wratishlaw to the effect that the Turkish Government had been playing fast and loose for a year past and that his master's patience had been worn out by their duplicity. He wished therefore to be taken under the British protection on the same terms as Sheikh Mubarak, on certain conditions. Mr. Wratishlaw reported the matter by telegram to Sir N. O'Connor who repeated the telegram to the Foreign Office expressing his own opinion. The Secretary of State for India then sent the following message to the Government of India on the 1st of June 1901—

No. 219 of Secret E, June 1901.

"Amir of Nejd asks for British protection on the following conditions :—

No. 118—230.
Deposition of Sheikh of Koweit in favour of his nephew and supply of arms to Amir of Nejd at his own cost. Amir of Nejd would leave us control over Koweit and guarantee safe construction of railways through Arabia. O'Connor, while recognising Amir of Nejd's demand as impracticable, suggests that we must not alienate his sympathy, and that we might insist on Mubarak giving some satisfaction. Should the latter consent and also ask for our protection against Nejd, O'Connor considers our position would be strengthened without offending Turkey. Foreign Office invites views in the matter."

145. His Excellency the Viceroy then telegraphed to the Secretary of State (telegram dated, the 8th June 1901) :—

"Your telegram of the 1st June. Situation at Koweit is somewhat altered by recent events. Kembell telegraphed, 1st June, that Captain of *Sphinx* had interview with Sheikh, 28th May, at which Sheikh requested that British Government would assume per-

No. 220 of correspondence cited.



manent protectorate, and that Kemball would visit Koweit to settle details. In that case he hoped for visits of British India steamer. Sheikh said Wali had urged him to accept Turkish officer and garrison, but he had refused. Kemball and Wratislaw concur in regarding this as principal object of recent visit of Wali. Kemball says Turks may possibly take no further action for present, but that they will not let matters rest for long, and thinks that presents may be best opportunity for assuming protectorate, which he regards sooner or latter as certain.

My views are as follows:—Sheikh in making these overtures is of course actuated by purely selfish motives. He is afraid of Nejd. He realises that Turkish protection means Turkish garrison; and he turns to us as least exacting of his neighbours. There is reason to think that he has also been coquetting with Russia and possibly France. We are precluded at present by agreement of January 1899 from throwing him over in favour of Amir. Two courses appear to be open. First is to declare open protectorate over Koweit, to which sanction of Foreign Office was reported in your telegram of 24th December 1898, but withdrawn in your telegram of 6th January 1899. In my opinion this inevitable ultimate solution. We should then be responsible for Sheikh, and could insist on reparation to Nejd; but we should also be bound to protect him against both Turkey and Nejd, neither of whom would dare to move in such a case. Turkey might be said to have impelled up to such a step by Wali's proposals, in face of O'Connor's reiterated warnings. Foreign Office will know whether objections raised by O'Connor in January 1899 still hold good.

Second alternative is to maintain patch work *status quo*, to tell Sheikh that no change in our position towards him is contemplated, to urge him to compensate Nejd, which he will probably decline to do, unless we find the money, and to warn Turkey that we cannot tolerate either Turkish officer or garrison at Koweit. These proposals are makeshift. They will not stop intrigue, and they cover a policy which in last resort is indistinguishable from protectorate.

As regards Amir of Nejd, I agree that, while unable to concede his request, we should not alienate his sympathy. He is seeking to discover from which patron he can get best terms, Turkey or ourselves. I would suggest private mission to him of British officer from side of Akaba, so as to avoid Turkish suspicions, to be arranged confidentially through Amir's agent at Busrah. We could explain inability to depose Mubarak because of agreement, but could undertake to restrain latter from future aggression, and to use good offices to prevent Turkish aggression on Nejd. Amir's views about arms and railways might also be more fully ascertained. Much depends on personality of Amir of which we know little at present."

146. In reply* to this telegram the Secretary of State in his telegram of 28th June 1901 stated that His Majesty's Government were unwilling to incur the embarrassment which might result from the declaration of a protectorate over Nejd or Koweit.

XIX.—(1) Threatened attack on Koweit by Amir of Nejd and the Turks. (2) Measures for defence of Koweit. (3) Attempt to settle differences between the Sheikh and Amir amicably.

July—October 1901.

147. The question then was what was the answer to be returned to the Amir of Nejd and the Sheikh of Koweit. His Excellency the Viceroy therefore asked for instructions in telegram, dated 1st July.

148. The Secretary of State wished to be enlightened further and telegraphed as follows on 23rd July:—

"As His Majesty's Government have decided not to proclaim a Protectorate over Koweit, the immediate problem is the discovery of means of maintaining our hold over the Sheikh, and at the same time finding a *modus vivendi* between the Sheikh and the Amir. At present Wratislaw seems to think that the Amir is disposed to treat with us and a settlement possible, while the season prevents hostility against Koweit. Other factors in the settlement depend on local knowledge, and, therefore, Kemball should be despatched to Koweit to study position carefully and report facts, and make suggestions for a satisfactory settlement. It may hereafter be necessary to warn Amir that, while anxious to effect amicable solution, we cannot allow Koweit to be attacked by Nejd. Kemball should remain at or near Koweit to carry out any instructions that may be sent when he has reported on the situation."

* *Vide* Appendix G.



No. 227.

149. The Political Resident was instructed accordingly. He visited Koweit, Mohammerah and Basrah and sent the following long message on 8th August, which showed that affairs at Koweit were again taking a bad turn.

"So far as Amir of Nejd and Sheikh Mubarak are concerned, position does not seem to have altered. Amir of Nejd is believed to be still at his capital, but there is no communication between Koweit and Nejd, and nothing definite is known regarding him. Mubarak told me that he has no intention of making hostile movement against Amir of Nejd who, he thinks, is not likely to make any move against Koweit for some time. In any case, it is certain he will not attempt to attack Koweit unless he is ordered by Turkey and is assured of their support. I could get no news in Koweit as to what is being done between Turkey and Amir of Nejd. Mubarak is dependent on Basrah for his news, and he told me that he had heard that his friend, the Vali, had been dismissed. He understood that the counsels of his enemies at Constantinople had prevailed, and that the Turks were prepared to concentrate troops in the Montefik, on which he expressed his readiness to come to terms with Amir of Nejd, and proposed certain conditions which appeared reasonable. He cannot open negotiations himself, but he suggested Sheikh of Mohammerah who is a friend of both parties as intermediary. From Koweit I proceeded to Mohammerah where I saw Sheikh, and asked him if he would act: he said he could not give me answer immediately, but he promised to consider matter and to let me have a reply as soon as possible; he said he would have great difficulty in finding reliable messengers to send to Amir of Nejd; moreover, road was unsafe, and he feared to do anything which might excite displeasure of the Turks who would object to the settlement between the Amir of Nejd and Mubarak. Failing Sheikh Khazal, the only way I can think to communicate with Amir of Nejd is through his Basrah Agent. I then proceeded to Basrah, where I saw Wratislaw, who told me that he had received reliable news that the Turks are preparing to concentrate formidable force on the Euphrates, and that the well known Edhem Pasha is on his way to Baghdad to assume command. He believes that this can only be intended against Koweit, and that great efforts will be made within next two or three months to settle Koweit question by force, if necessary. I fear that if Wratislaw's news is correct, Amir of Nejd will refuse to entertain proposal for settlement with Mubarak, being assured of the Turkish support, and even if the arrangement is made, I do not think that the Turks will be deterred from proceeding against Koweit. As to maintaining our hold over Mubarak, we can only do this if we assure him of our support against the Turks. He asked me what he was to do if the Turks land men at Koweit, as he could not commit himself to the extent of using force against the Turks unless he is assured of our support, and he is most anxious to know how far he can count on this. There is no doubt that the chief factor of importance in the Koweit question is the action of Turkey. Settlement between the Amir of Nejd and Mubarak is of secondary importance, and the question of maintaining hold upon Koweit depends entirely on the degree of support, we can give Mubarak against Turkey. At present he is entirely in our hands and anxious to remain so, but if he finds that we cannot support him, he will have to make the best terms he can with them. "Sphinx" is the only ship of war now in the Gulf. She took me to Koweit, and returns me to Bushire to coal. Under existing circumstances it seems useless for her to return to Koweit unless instructions are sent as to the action to be taken in the event of Turkish landing men. It might be as well that she should proceed to Basrah where Turkish gun-boat is and where she would receive earliest information of the intention of Turks to send troops to Koweit by sea. Fact of "Sphinx" being at Basrah might prevent any such (move-ment?) and give time for negotiations."

150. On the 9th Colonel Kemball again telegraphed:—

No. 228

"Immediate danger I now fear is that Turkish troops may be landed at Koweit from Turkish gun-boat. At present instructions given to Navy do not allow of any active support being given to Sheikh to prevent this, and it is advisable that early instructions should be sent to provide for this contingency. If Turkish troops are once landed, matters will assume very serious aspect."

151. The Government of India received confirmatory evidence of the intentions of the Porte from a copy of a telegram addressed by the Sultan to the Vali of Basrah, which was secured on 26th July by the Captain of the *Sphinx* and which ran as follows:—

"Accordingly to the agreement of the Powers, if there is at any place a Turkish Flag or officers of the Government, it is not in the right of any of the Powers to interfere. Therefore, you are to endeavour to persuade Sheikh Mubarak to receive a party of soldiers with their Captain, and, if it is necessary for promotion or presents to be made, let us know what Mubarak Pasha wants in a report, and it will be done according to Government custom."

No. 229.

151A. A purport of the Political Resident's telegrams, dated 8th and 9th August and of the Sultan's message was telegraphed by His Excellency the Viceroy to the Secretary of State on 10th August with the following addition:—

"*Sphinx* is at present the only ship of war in Gulf. But I am warning Admiral that others may be required at short notice. Please telegraph instructions as to action to be taken if Turks move against Koweit, and whether any assurance of support may be given to Mubarak. It should seem that naval demonstration in Gulf and plain words at Constantinople are sole means of avoiding serious complications, if rumours as to Turkish intentions are correct."



152. The cables were then busy with important telegraphic correspondence between the Secretary of State, His Excellency the Viceroy, the Political Resident, Bushire, and the Naval Commander-in-Chief as to the measures to be taken against the threatened attacks on Koweit by the Turks and the Amir, which should be read:—

(1) Telegram, dated the 12th August 1901.

No. 287.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

"O'Connor instructed on 10th that, if further information shows attack on Koweit is really intended, he should ask for explanation. If explanation unsatisfactory, he is to intimate that we shall if necessary, use force to prevent it as contemplated in my telegram of 14th February 1899. Mubarak may be informed, if you think fit, that, although we do not desire to proclaim a Protectorate, our agreement with him will be observed if he observes his engagement to us."

[This telegram was repeated to the Political Resident with instructions to communicate it personally to the Sheikh as ordered he left on 18th August for Koweit.]

No. 289.

(2) Telegram, dated the 12th August 1901.

No. 288.

From—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"Referring to your telegram 1362-E.A., "Perseus" and "Marathon" both at Karachi *Sphinx* at Bushire. "Perseus" has been ordered to proceed to Bushire with despatch. "Marathon" has heavy sick list, but has been directed to prepare for sea at very short notice."

(3) Telegram, dated the 20th August 1901.

No. 247.

From—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Port Louis,
To—The Secretary to the Government of India in the Military (Marine) Department.

"*Perseus* at Koweit *Sphinx* left Bushire to-day for same place, conveying Resident in the Persian Gulf. *Marathon* leaving Karachi for Bushire probably 22nd of August with despatch. Request concurrence Government of India to utilise "Assaye" in Persian Gulf if necessary."

(4) Telegram, dated the 23rd August 1901.

No. 251.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"Your telegram, 14th August. Koweit. I have returned from Koweit where I made communication to Mubarak as directed. Sheikh, Mohammedrah, has written to Mubarak to ask him if he would advise messenger for Amir of Nejd going *via* Koweit. Mubarak replied that Koweit road impassable, and suggested the Najaf road. I hope soon to hear that the Sheikh of Mohammedrah has been able to despatch Envoy. "Perseus" is at Koweit. "Sphinx" here I hear "Marathon" is on her way to Bushire, but I do not think she is required here at present. I am inclined to think that she had better wait at Karachi, from which place she can reach Koweit within few days, if we hear Turkey, in disregard of warning, intends pushing attack by land. Intense heat in Gulf now likely to render ships inefficient. I hear from Basrah that Turkish gun-boat left 22nd August for Katar with intention of calling at Koweit. *Perseus* will not allow her to land troops there.

(5) Telegram, dated the 24th August 1901.

No. 258.

From—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Port Louis.
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"Telegram received from 'Sphinx' Bushire, 23rd August:—'Have just returned from Koweit with Resident in the Persian Gulf. All quiet. *Perseus* remains there with orders to prevent Turkish gun-boat landing troops, using force if necessary. She has not left Basrah yet. About four thousand Turkish troops are massed seven days' journey from Koweit. *Marathon* will arrive Bushire, 26th August. May I use force if necessary?'"



(6) Telegram, No 1475-E.A., dated the 26th August 1901.

No. 254. From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.
"Your telegram, 23rd. "Marathon" left Karachi, 22nd. If you think her retention Bushire unnecessary at present she can return Karachi till wanted".

(7) Telegram, No. 1476-E.A., dated the 26th August 1901.

No. 255. From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Port Louis.
Your telegram, 24th. His Majesty's Government have instructed Ambassador, Constantinople, that, if attack on Koweit appears to be intended, he should ask for explanation. If explanation unsatisfactory, he will intimate that we shall, if necessary, use force to prevent it. *Perseus* can, therefore, use force, if necessary, to prevent landing at Koweit of Turkish troops.

No. 256. 153. Matters were then precipitated by the prompt and decisive action taken by the Commander of the *Perseus*, as reported in telegram, dated the 26th August from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

"My telegram of the 23rd August. Koweit. Report received from *Perseus* that Turkish gun-boat "Zuhaf" arrived at Koweit 24th August, and was told by "Perseus" that the landing of troops at Koweit would not be allowed. Captain of Turkish gun-boat visited Sheikh on 25th, and did his best to persuade him to acknowledge Turkish authority. Sheikh refused and Captain then assumed threatening tone and said he would go to Busrah and report state of affairs, and would then return with ship and troops to enforce Turkish authority. Captain of "Perseus" was later on informed by Captain of "Zuhaf" that he intended sailing that evening for Fao to lodge protest."

154. The above words should be noted as a garbled account was wired by the Turkish officer to the Porte. The latter's threat to bring a Turkish force to enforce Turkish authority should be also noted.

No. 257. 155. The Government of India then received a telegram, dated the 30th August from His Majesty's Secretary of State as follows:—

"Following telegram received from O'Connor to Foreign Office, dated 29th August, received to-day:—"Minister of Foreign Affairs says that Wali of Basrah has reported that Captain of Turkish corvette "Zuhaf" was warned by Commander, His Majesty's Ship "Perseus," to clear out of Koweit, that the matter was submitted to Council of Ministers yesterday, and that he was asked to speak to me. I explained that Wali's report was inaccurate, but that Commander, not knowing whether troops on board or not, probably thought it desirable, in order to prevent possibility of unpleasant incidents, to warn Captain in a prompt way that he had orders to prevent their landing. Minister seems fairly satisfied, but wishes to ask me unofficially whether His Majesty's Government intend to occupy Koweit. I said that they had no such intention provided that Turkey did not force their hands by interfering with Sheikh with whom, as he knew, we had a special arrangement. I told him I had lately heard some four thousand troops were being concentrated about seven days' march from Koweit, and that it was generally believed in Basrah that their objective was Koweit. I sincerely hoped this was not true, as it would cause grave trouble. The present tension, was dangerous, and any fresh incident might seriously complicate matters; but, if he gave me a formal assurance that Koweit would not be attacked or Sheikh molested, I believed the situation would resume its normal condition. I therefore strongly advised His Excellency to enable me to relieve anxiety of His Majesty's Government in this respect. Minister intimated he would submit matter to Sultan this evening.

156. Action of Commander has precipitated matter; but, if Turks really intend to attack Koweit, the moment for bringing question to an issue is perhaps not unfavourable."

No. 257.

157. We have then to note carefully the following messages on the subject of the communications between the several Powers concerned in Koweit affairs, the measures proposed to defend Koweit, the means adopted for interchange of views between the Amir of Nejd and the Sheikh of Koweit:—

(1)

Telegram, dated the 4th September 1901.

From—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Port Louis,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"In continuation of my telegram of the 31st August, "Perseus" reports rumour that Turkey intriguing with Nejd combined action on Koweit. No present danger.



41

(2)

Telegram, dated the 6th September 1901.

No. 265.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

"In continuation of my secret telegram of 30th August. Koweit. German Ambassador has protested against action of *Perseus* at Koweit: firstly, under treaty of Berlin on assumption that we intend to proclaim Protectorate. He was informed that report was untrue and that we had no such intention. Secondly, on ground of refusal to acknowledge Sultan's authority with which we had stated that we did not desire to interfere. He was informed that no desire to disturb the *status quo* at Koweit."

(3)

No. 269.

Telegram, dated the 6th September 1901.

From—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Port Louis,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

In continuation of my telegram of the 4th September. Senior Officer, Persian Gulf informs me that, if political considerations prevent present fortifying or employment of troops, and diplomacy fails to render action unnecessary, withdrawal of non-combatant inhabitants to island in the Bay advisable to permit free exercise of shell-fire and prevent occupation of town. Wells are situated three miles outside town, which is thus rendered equally untenable for either side.

(4)

No. 271.

Telegram, dated the 9th September 1901.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

"Turkish Ambassador has communicated protest, 1st against alleged British Protectorate 2nd, against Agreement which Porte asserted to be invalid, Sheikh being Turkish official and Koweit forming a part of the Sandjak of Nejd, where Ottoman officials have exercised authority since conquest. They appealed to Treaty of guarantee for the integrity of Ottoman dominions. Subsequently, in telegram of 5th September; O'Connor reports verbatim message from the Porte that they are willing to give formal assurances that Koweit will not be attacked by Turkey, provided that same assurances are given formally to them as were given to German Ambassador—see my telegram of 6th September. O'Connor replies that he believed that he had already given similar assurances, but, in any case, *His Majesty's Government, though willing to respect the status quo, would not allow interference with Koweit.*"

(5)

No. 277.

Telegram, No. 1569-E.A., dated the 11th September 1901.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.
To—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

"Your telegram, 9th September. Koweit. Please specify character of communication which you would propose to make to Amir of Nejd. What are condition alluded to in your telegram of 8th August on which Mubarak was prepared to make terms.

(6)

No. 272.

Telegram, dated the 11th September 1901.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"It is impossible for me to get reliable information, but I hear that the concentration of Turkish troops alluded to in my telegram, dated 8th August, is still going on. This concentration can only be intended against Koweit, and I think it advisable that Ambassador, Constantinople, should be asked to ascertain from Turkish Arabia if concentration of troops is a fact, and, if so, to enquire from Porte what it means. The place on Euphrates, where concentration is said to be going on, is within short distance from Koweit, which may any day be taken by *coup de main*."

(7)

No. 280.

Telegram, No. 1582-E.A., dated the 12th September 1901.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla,
To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

"My telegram, 16th August. Koweit. Kemball telegraphs, September 11th:—It is impossible (see above) *coup de main*. What is O'Connor's information on the subject?"



42

No. 281.

(8)

Telegram, dated the 12th September 1901.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

"O'Connor instructed, 7th September, that we cannot recede from our position at Koweit, and that, if Porte should insist on raising the question of their rights, we may have to convert into something much more precise present indefinite understanding with Sheikh. 9th September, Turkish Ambassador asked for and obtained confirmation by Foreign Office of assurances given by O'Connor terminating present controversy on basis of mutual maintenance of *status quo* at Koweit."

(9)

No. 282.

Telegram, dated the 12th September 1901.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"Your telegram of the 11th September, Koweit. I suggest that Wratishaw should send for Amir's agent and tell him that Mubarak is willing to make peace and that British Government wishes that peace should be made, and ask him to communicate with his master. He should inform agent of Mubarak's terms which will serve as basis of negotiations, and at the same time tell him to inform Amir that British Government will not permit attack upon Koweit. Mubarak's terms are briefly as follows:—Amir to withdraw support from Mubarak's enemies; Mubarak also to cease supporting Amir's enemies; both Amir and Mubarak to restrain their tribes from molesting each other."

(10)

No. 302.

Telegram, dated the 24th September 1901.

From—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Trincomalee,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"Senior Officer, Persian Gulf, reported yesterday force of Amir of Nejd advanced within two days' march from Koweit. *Marathon* left for Koweit; *Assaye* ordered to follow from Karachi. *Sphinx* hastening from Jask. In case attack on Koweit by Amir of Nejd, is it to be repelled by force?"

(11)

No. 303.

Telegram, No. 1650-E. A., dated the 26th September 1901.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,

To—His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indian Station, Trincomalee.

"Your telegram, 24th September. If force of Amir of Nejd attack Koweit they should be repelled by force; but opportunity should, if possible, be taken to send warning to Amir that British force will assist in defending the town. Political Resident has been instructed accordingly."

(12)

No. 304.

Telegram No. 1651-E. A., dated 26th September 1901.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,

To—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

"Your telegram, 24th September. Admiral has been informed that if forces of Amir of Nejd attack Koweit they should be repelled by force; but that opportunity should, if possible, be taken to send warning to Amir that British force will assist in defending the town. Please arrange to send warning if possible."

(13)

No. 305.

Telegram No. 1652-E. A., dated the 26th September 1901.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla,

To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

"My telegram, 25th, Koweit. In response to request from Admiral for immediate instructions in contingency of attack by Amir of Nejd upon Koweit I have replied, in pursuance of previous instructions from His Majesty's Government that such attack should be repelled by force; but that opportunity should, if possible, be taken to send warning to Amir of Nejd that British force will assist in defending Koweit."



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(14)

Telegram, dated the 26th September 1901.

No. 306.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,

To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla,

"Ambassador, Constantinople, instructed in accordance with suggestion contained in your telegram of 14th September regarding Koweit."

(15)

No. 308.

Telegram, dated the 26th September 1901.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

"Following telegram received from Wratishaw yesterday :— I received instructions yesterday and saw the Amir's agent to-day, but he declined to transmit peaceable proposals and warning, fearing the anger of Amir. I have asked whether I may write to Amir direct, as his agent will forward letter. We have three ships of war at Koweit and *Assaye* is on the way. Report has reached me from Fao that Amir's troops have retired; but not yet confirmed."

(16)

No. 310.

Telegram, dated the 27th September 1901.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,

To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

"Koweit. Your telegrams 25th and 26th September. O'Connor reports Sultan yesterday instructed Commander, 6th Army Corps, to inform Amir that he must keep quiet, Amir complained of aggression on the part of Koweit. Following telegram sent to O'Connor to-day :— As Turkish Government is taking steps to restrain Amir, attempt on our part to intervene with him would probably be superfluous. Viceroy of India has instructed Admiral to assist Sheikh in repelling any attack on Koweit. Message to the following effect will be conveyed to Sheikh of Koweit through the Government of India. His Majesty's Government have used their influence for the purpose of securing him against any encroachment upon the privilege which he now enjoys. Sultan assumed us that Turkish Government is putting pressure upon Amir of Nejd with this object, but complaints are made that Sheikh on this side has permitted raids upon territories of the Amir Sheikh must put an end to such misconduct, and must clearly understand that His Majesty's Government will use their good offices on his behalf only if he allows himself to be guided in this and other matters by their advice. Please instruct Kemball to send, without delay, above message to Sheikh."

158. The message, as directed by the Secretary of State in his telegram dated 27th September, was duly communicated by Colonel Meade to the Sheikh. He promised compliance but denied all complicity in the alleged raids.

159. As regards the Amir of Nejd, the Naval Commander-in-Chief wired on 27th September with reference to instructions sent in the Government of India's telegram of 27th September that he could not sanction landing a crew for operations ashore at Koweit, but that otherwise directions had been given to act in accordance with the terms of the telegram.

160. Reports about this time reached Koweit that the forces of the Amir of Nejd had raided a caravan near Koweit on 23rd September but were repulsed. The Political Resident doubted whether the Amir was with the forces and whether he would press the attack on Koweit in view of the presence of the British ships of war unless the Turks actively supported them, Colonel Kemball promised to send him warning, if possible, before taking active measures.

161. Meanwhile Mr. Wratishaw had undertaken with the permission of the Foreign Office to assist Colonel Kemball in opening communications between the Amir of Nejd's agent and the Sheikh of Mohammerah, who had under taken to be the peacemaker between the Sheikh of Koweit and the Amir.



162. On 21st October the Amir was at Jafe, claimed to be within his territory by Sheikh Mubarak two days' journey from the point of communication with Turkey. The Sheikh asked the Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf for a letter from the British Government to the Amir or through Turkey, with a view to induce him to leave his territory and save conflict.

No. 166 of collection cited.

163. All the efforts of Mr. Wratislaw to bring about peace between the Amir and the Sheikh apparently ended in smoke, for the Government of India received the following telegram from Colonel Kemball :—

No. 193 of Ditto.

Dated 2nd November 1901.

"I have heard from Wratislaw that he has received rather arrogant reply from the Amir of Nejd, who says that both he and Sheikh Koweit are subjects of Sultan of Turkey, and if Sheikh wishes to negotiate, he should address Sultan, 'and consequently there is no margin left for correspondence on the subject.' Wratislaw adds. 'Amir's Agents, however, states that he received at the same time a private note to the effect that Amir wishes to become intimate friend British Government, and he believes the above letter was for the benefit of Turkey in case they intercepted messenger, but unless he shows me the note which he seems reluctant to do, I do not think any notice should be taken,' I have suggested to Wratislaw that he should tell agent that Amir might show the sincerity of his professions by leaving Hafer and making peace with Mubarak. Hafer is a place within three days of Koweit where Amir has been for some time. Mubarak claims it as his territory, and is incensed against Amir for staying there and consuming pasture of his tribes."

164. The Amir soon after moved to Safwan—about 16 hours' journey from Koweit. As events will show afterwards he was only co-operating with the Turks towards a *coup de main* against Koweit.

XX.—Question of defence of Koweit by sea and land, 1899-1901.

165. This question came into prominence during the recent proceeding in connection with Koweit.

166. In February 1899 the Secretary of State, when authorising us to use naval force to prevent a Turkish attack on Koweit, asked for a report on the defensibility of Koweit by naval force alone. On 15th February 1899 Admiral Douglas reported, presumably after consulting his officers in the Gulf, that, "with sufficient warning to collect ships Navy alone can undertake defence of Koweit."

Nos. 624, 625, 631, 650 and in Secret E, March 1899, Nos. 58-63.

167. The Secretary of State was informed accordingly. But in January 1900 Captain Denison, the Senior Naval Officer in the Gulf, reported "I consider a few men-of-war could easily protect the place from an attack by sea, but I think a considerable force of troops would be necessary to defend the territory from a determined attack by the Turks in force, for, though the people are a warlike race, one cannot be sure to what extent they are to be relied on against disciplined troops." In April 1901, when the Amir of Nejd was expected to attack Koweit, Colonel Kemball said "I can send ship of war, but this can only have normal effect and may not deter Amir if he is instructed by Turkey."

Enclosure of No. 200 in Secret E., October 1900, Nos. 175-28.

Nos. 151-152 in Secret E., June 1901, Nos. 118-230.

168. On the 31st August 1901 the Naval Commander-in-Chief telegraphed.—

"Senior Officer Persian Gulf, reports that Sheikh of Koweit cannot and will not openly oppose disciplined Turkish army. Town not walled. For stopping advance of troops by land, long range shell fire from ships little use by day and none by night."

Nos. 263 in Secret E., October 1901, Nos. 184-315.



**XXI.—Question of discontinuance of the use of the Turkish flag at
Koweit, August—September 1901.**

169. The use of the Turkish flag by the Sheikh of Koweit was one to which the Political officers in the Persian Gulf were strongly adverse, as it seemed so inconsistent with the independent status claimed by us for the Sheikh. When asked the reason for its use he replied "that it was flown by his father and grandfather on such occasions as a Mahomedan flag and did not indicate that they were under any control or protection of the Turks."

170. The question was now pressed by the Political Resident. When, as related above he was going to proceed to Koweit on 18th August he telegraphed :

"Should any advice be given to Sheikh about discontinuing use of Turkish flag? He spoke to me about his at my recent visit, and said he was willing to do so. It seems to me the continued use of Turkish flag in Koweit will always be source of trouble, but if Sheikh abolishes it now, the question of his Fao property may be brought into immediate prominence".

171. Upon this His Excellency the Viceroy telegraphed to the Secretary of States on 18th August :—

"Kemball, who starts for Koweit Tuesday, asked if he may advise Sheikh to discontinue use of Turkish flag, which he has hitherto flown as Muhammedan flag. Sheikh is willing to discontinue it. Action proposed might possibly raise question of Sheikh's Fao property. But I think advice should be given. Anything tending to dissociate Sheikh from Turks in public estimation is useful, while there is inconsistency in refusing to allow Turkish troops to land and allowing Sheikh to fly Turkish flag."

172. His Majesty's Secretary of State telegraphed on the 28th August to say that he had consulted the Foreign Office as to Kemball's suggestion, that they enquired what flag the Sheikh would fly in place of the Turkish flag, and were opposed to interfere with *status quo* or any action which could be interpreted as an assertion of complete independence of the Sheikh quoting Sir O'Connor's letter of 10th April 1900.

173. Colonel Kemball was then consulted and he replied on 2nd September as follows :—

"My view is that Sheikh should fly red flag as independent Arab Chief. It seems to me that fact of flying Turkish flag must be construed as sign of dependence, whereas we consider Sheikh independent, and have dealt with him as such. Events of past two-and-a-half years have so disturbed *status quo* that determination of status of Koweit cannot be much longer postponed. It seems to me that the sooner the outward emblem of Turkish supremacy is discontinued the better."

174. Colonel Kemball's telegram was repeated on 4th September to the Secretary of State, who wired His Majesty's Government's decision on 25th September.

"Yours 4th September. Koweit. Turkish Government having agreed to drop discussion of basis of present maintenance of status quo, His Majesty's Government cannot consistently contend that new departure is inevitable, and as it appears that Sheikh has flown Turkish flag since 1871, they would be justified in advising Mubarak to discontinue its use. Copy of despatch to Ambassador, Berlin, stating position of His Majesty's Government with regard to Koweit goes to you by this week's mail. His Majesty's Government have no desire to raise the question whether Koweit is integral part of Ottoman dominion, nor to interfere with status quo or with Sultan's authority as it exists."

175. This message was repeated to Colonel Kemball with the addition that he should avoid further discussion of the flag question with the Sheikh.



**XXII.—Attempt to take the Sheikh of Koweit to Constantinople,
November and December 1901.**

176. We have read above the solemn assurances given by the Porte in the month of September 1901 to maintain the *status quo* at Koweit and not to send troops to that place. His Majesty's Government were apparently satisfied with these assurances. But it was evident within 3 months from the date they were given that the Turkish Government never intended to abide by them. They continued to concentrate troops on the Euphrates, while the Amir of Nejd was moving towards Koweit evidently under a concerted plan with the Turks, waiting only for their orders and a good opportunity for an attack on that town. In November he had occupied Safwan—within 16 hours' march from Koweit. There was considerable alarm in Koweit and the Sheikh asked for the presence of additional gun boats in Koweit harbour, a request which was complied with. A few weeks only had passed from the date of this incident, when the Nakib of Basrah visited Koweit and handed to Mubarak a telegram purporting to have emanated from Constantinople, to the effect that Mubarak's assertion of his independence was disapproved by the Sultan, and that punishment must ensue, unless he made his submission to the Turkish Government.

177. To this communication, Mubarak, after consultation with the Senior Naval Officer, replied to the effect that his relations with the Turkish Government were the same as they had always been. Later on, a representation being made by our Ambassador at Constantinople, this telegram and the action of the Nakib of Basrah were disavowed by the Porte.

178. The Nakib of Basrah then took a bold step to force the hands of the Sheikh of Koweit. About the close of the month of November the Sheikh of Koweit's agent came to know that the Nakib was going to leave Fao for Koweit with a threatening message from the Sultan and that an attempt would be made to carry away the Sheikh to Constantinople. His Majesty's ships *Redbreast* and *Sphinx* were at the time in Koweit Bay, and the *Pomone* at Basrah, with Captain Simons, Senior Naval Officer on board. Colonel Kemball when apprized of the intended manoeuvres of the Turks, asked Captain Simons by telegram on 30th November to proceed to Koweit. The *Pomone* arrived at Koweit at noon on 1st December, while the *Sphinx* had left the day before for Bushire for instructions from Colonel Kemball. The Turkish ship the *Zuhaf* arrived at Koweit two hours afterwards. There was the usual exchange of courtesies. Lieutenant Hand, the first Lieutenant, visited the Nakib. Captain Simon then left on a boat for the *Zuhaf*, but met the Nakib, when he was on his way to the shore.

179. The Turkish Officer of the guard returned Lieutenant Hand's visit, but the Nakib did not return Captain Simons' visit.

On the same day the Sheikh informed Captain Simons that the Nakib had presented him with a letter containing telegraphic orders from the Sultan that he must either go to Constantinople to be member of the Council of State on a high salary, or leave Koweit and live elsewhere on a pension given him, and requesting an early reply. The Sheikh was very much upset at this, the second threatening telegram he had received recently from the Sultan, though his Agent at Basrah had forewarned him some days before about it; and he had written on the 30th November by the "*Sphinx*" to the Political Resident, Bushire, asking what he was to say, if such a message came and if the British Government would help him, and stating that if the British Government did not check and stop the action of the Turks, he would have to join them. The Captains of the *Pomone* and *Redbreast* visited the Sheikh, and informed him that he would undoubtedly be supported; but he was much depressed and said that, although he wished for a British protectorate and to carry out his agreement with the British, he had not yet got any definite assurance from the Political Resident at Bushire, in writing, that the British Government would protect him; and if he did not get one, he would have to make terms with the Turks, whose troops were close to, and of whom he was afraid. Eventually on Captain Simons' advice he decided not to reply at once, but to ask for some days to consider his answer, during which a reply to his letter of the 30th from the Resident would arrive, and the British Government could be communicated with by telegram, and an answer received.



180. On the morning of the 3rd December, the Sheikh accordingly visited the "Nakib," and obtained three days' grace to consider his reply, the Nakib at the same time informing him that if he accepted a Turkish protectorate, all would be well, and he could remain at Koweit, some Turkish soldiers of course being stationed there. The Captains of the *Redbreast* and *Pomone*, visited the Sheikh on his return from the Nakib, and it was arranged that "Redbreast" should proceed at once to Bushire with a telegram for the Naval Commander-in-Chief and Admiralty, and letters from the Sheikh and Captain Simons to the Resident. "Redbreast" accordingly left at 1-50 p.m. with orders to await the Government's reply and bring it over at once.

181. Previous to the "Redbreast" leaving, however, the likelihood of the Nakib changing his mind about the three days, or the Government's answer not arriving in time had been discussed, and Captain Simons endeavoured to get the Sheikh to agree to say in such a case that he could not reply so soon, but must have time to consider, or to give some other evasive reply: but this he would not undertake to do, saying the Sultan would consider it a refusal and punish him, in case he was not supported by the British Government: finally, however, he agreed not to make terms with the Turks before the English Government's answer was received, if the British ships threatened to bombard Koweit if he did so, as the Sultan could not then blame him.

182. Next day, on the morning of the 4th December, possibly on account of the "Redbreast's" departure the Nakib sent to say he had changed his mind, and could not give the Sheikh any more time to consider his reply. He wished to leave for Basrah that night, and although the Sheikh again tried to obtain time, the Nakib would not grant it. An appointment, was, therefore, made for the Nakib that afternoon at the Sheikh's house; and Captain Simons again endeavoured in the forenoon to persuade the Sheikh to give an evasive reply, but with no effect.

183. At 2-10 in the afternoon the "Sphinx" arrived with an answer to the Sheikh's letter of the 30th from the Resident, who asked Captain Simons to inform the Sheikh that he had telegraphed to the British Government for instructions, and a more definite assurance of support to the Sheikh, but meanwhile the Sheikh could rely on the British Government's support for the maintenance of the integrity of Koweit against the Turks, as he had already informed the Sheikh by their orders last August. The Sheikh, however, was not satisfied with this reply, having hoped for an answer in writing from the Resident as to further definite British support; and he consequently refused to undertake to reply himself evasively to the Sultan's message, but wished to say that Captain Simons would not let him reply, and as this course appeared the only one practicable to keep him from committing himself, it was agreed to, and Captain Phillips of the "Sphinx," Lieutenant Hand and Captain Simons attended the interview between him and the Nakib, which shortly afterwards took place, and in which he stated that Captain Simons would not let him reply, and Captain Simons confirmed this statement, justifying his action on the grounds of the Sultan's two threatening telegrams being a violation of his agreement with the British Government to preserve the *status quo* at Koweit, which called for my interference. The Nakib then left, and with the Vali's brother went on board the "Zuhaf" that night, and sailed for Basrah at six next morning, the "Sphinx" having previously left at 3 A.M., in order to report the facts. Captain Simons remained at the Sheikh's house all day on the 4th, and slept there, as he did not deem it advisable to leave him before the "Zuhaf" sailed, as without his support and presence it was quite likely the Nakib would have endeavoured again to persuade him to give a favourable reply.

184. During the interview with the Nakib in the afternoon of the 4th, a signalman who was making a signal from the shore to the ship, distant 2½ miles, used by permission the Sheikh's flagstaff (the only one there was) and hoisted the semaphore flag instead of the Sheikh's, which was observed by the Vali's brother, who asked if the British flag was hoisted already. The circumstance was explained, however, to him, and the Nakib seemed quite satisfied. Another flag-staff has since been put up for signalling purposes. The Vali's brother also remarked that they had got no answer from the Sheikh, which they came for.



185. The "Redbreast" returned on the 6th with the Admiralty telegram of the 4th December, which was read to the Sheikh, and which gave him great satisfaction; and subsequently the "Sphinx" returned on the 7th with a letter for the Sheikh from the Resident embodying the substance of the telegram, and which he read to all his principal men.

186. The telegram referred to of 4th December was the message of the Secretary of State repeated to the Admiral, dated 4th December 1901, which was a reply to His Excellency the Viceroy's telegram of 3rd December, reporting the events at Koweit.

187. His Excellency the Viceroy suggested that the Sheikh should be informed as stated in Foreign Office telegram dated the 10th August—British Government will not tolerate attack by Turkish forces on Koweit and will if necessary use force to prevent it. He can therefore rely upon our support if he continues to observe engagement with us and follows our advice, which is in this instance, that he should refuse the Sultan's invitation to Constantinople."

No. 225 of Secret E., March 1902, Nos. 127-357.

188. The Secretary of State replied on 4th December 1901, as follows:—

"Your telegram of the 3rd December. Inform Sir Arthur Hardinge's question of Sultan's right over Koweit was discussed with the Porte in September last, and that we then received from His Majesty a distinct assurance that he entirely respects the *status quo* at Koweit and abstains from sending troops there. There can be no reason for fresh assertion of Sultan's rights or for attempt to further define them, which, if not superfluous, must clearly involve alteration. The action of the Nakib appears to constitute distinct violation of Sultan's promise, and in these circumstances His Majesty's Government are prepared to support Sheikh, and will not tolerate an attack by Turkish troops or ships on Koweit. Sheikh should not leave Koweit and should continue to observe his engagements with us. A communication has been addressed to the Porte complaining of Nakib's conduct and demanding that he be instructed to desist from exercising pressure upon the Sheikh of Koweit."

189. Representations were duly made to the Porte about the Nakib's action—but both the Porte and the Palace disavowed all knowledge of the Nakib's mission, and the Foreign Minister stated that the Sheikh's presence in Constantinople would be most embarrassing, and that there was no intention to send force to Koweit or to disturb in any way the *status quo*.

190. There was about this time a report in the newspapers that the British Naval Officers had during the recent imbroglio hauled down the Turkish flag and ordered the Sheikh to fly an independent flag.

191. The Political Resident was asked to report and replied:—

"There is no truth in the report. On 4th December Senior Naval Officer, who was on shore, had occasion to make a signal to ship and for this purpose used, with the permission of the Sheikh, Sheikh's flag staff, on which semaphore flag was hoisted".

The facts are related in paragraph 184 above.

XXIII.—Alarm at Koweit and Landing of British guns.

December 1901—January 1902.

192. At the close of December 1901 there was again a great deal of alarm on account of a threatened attack of the Amir and the Turks on Koweit. The Political Resident telegraphed to Calcutta on 28th December:—

"Following telegram was received from Wratishlaw to-day:—Amir with part of his forces is fifteen miles from Busrah and in constant communication with Wali and Mushir. His Agent has sent him seventy tons of provisions. Sultan has ordered present of two thousand pounds to be made him from provincial treasury which is empty. I hear himself attacks Koweit after Ramzan. Wali and Mushir spend hours daily at the telegraph office, but I cannot learn purport of their communication with Constantinople. I think it is desirable that reinforcements should be sent by Admiral to Koweit."

193. On the 1st January 1902 His Excellency Rear-Admiral Day H. Bosanquet telegraphed from Trincomali:—

"Following telegram received from Senior Officer, Persian Gulf, Koweit, 29th December:—Consul at Busrah reported to Resident in the Persian Gulf on 27th December as follows:—Amir of Nejd, with part of his force, is fifteen miles distant from Busrah in constant communication with Wali and Mushir. His Agent has sent him seventy tons of provisions. Sultan



has ordered a present to be made him from provincial treasury which is empty. I hear Amir of Nejd threatens to attack Koweit, 11th January, after Lamzan. Wali and Musbir spend hours daily at telegraph office, but I cannot learn purport of their communications with Constantinople. I am again arranging defence of Koweit with Sheikh in the event of Turkish attack. He now insists on remaining at Jehara which is centre for his tribe, and refuses to retire before the Turks on Koweit if necessary; but would make terms unless British Government sent troops as well direct there to him. If the Turks attack Jehara in force, only troops or very large body of seamen with field pieces can hold it, fire from ships being useless. Submit, in view of Sheikh's decision and the present situation at Busrah, that all ships and field guns available should be sent at once to Koweit and troops be held in readiness to embark instantly if Turks move.

Ship of war "Varyag" left Koweit, 24th December, for Lingah and Bunder Abbas. Consul from Bushire whilst here gave presents and offered assistance in the name of Russian Government to Sheikh, if he asked for it, to maintain his independence.

Admiralty have been informed. I have ordered the "Fox" and "Perseus" to Koweit from Bombay with some extra guns."

194. From a message, dated 31st December 1901, sent by the Senior Naval Officer to the Admiralty it appears that at the urgent request of the Sheikh, owing to the Fort at Jehara being 5 miles from nearest ship have placed two Nordenfeldt guns and two maxims in it until Amir leaves vicinity of Koweit.

195. These proceedings, on being reported at Constantinople elicited a protest from the Porte. A remonstrance to Lord Lansdowne was also made by the Turkish Ambassador.

196. The Marquess of Lansdowne thereupon addressed to Sir N. O'Connor the following despatch :—

"A note has been sent to me by the Turkish Ambassador, in which he repeats remonstrance against the action of the British Naval Officers, and requests that they may be ordered to abstain from interference in the internal affairs of Koweit and to remove the guns which they have landed.

His Excellency has been informed, in reply, that the apprehensions of the British Naval Officers and the measures which they took were justified by the recent action of the Nakib, which has been subsequently disavowed by the Turkish Government, as well as by the threatening nature of the movements of the Amir of Nejd, who, until the last few days, has been in the vicinity of Koweit, and who is believed even now not to be far distant from that place; *that when they afforded the Sheikh of Koweit the aid necessary for his protection the British Naval Officers had done no more than co-operate towards the maintenance of the status quo; that they had shown a scrupulous avoidance of any action tending to modify the relations of the Sheikh Mubarak towards the Sultan or the political status of Koweit; and that they have received instructions, as soon as it is clear that there is no longer any danger of an attack, to desist from their defensive preparations.*

Your Excellency might privately let the Porte know that the Russian Consul at Bushire who was on board the Russian battle-ship which recently visited Koweit, urged the Sheikh to solicit the assistance of Russia for the maintenance of his independence, and that it is doubtless due to the pressure and support of British ships of war that the offer was declined by him."

197. The following telegram, dated the 26th January 1902, was also received from His Majesty's Secretary of State :—

"Your telegram of the 1st instant. Koweit. At request of Foreign Office, Admiralty have instructed naval authorities to desist from defensive preparation the moment it becomes clear that Koweit is no longer really threatened by Nejd or by Turks. Turkish Ambassador expressed grave concern at action of naval authorities, and was informed that these untoward occurrences were result of the inability of Porte to control local Agents, and that, so long as place continued to be threatened, they must not complain if precautionary measures are continued."

198. The guns were removed afterwards from Jehara and restored to the ship to which they belonged.

XXIV.—Prohibition of exports to Koweit from Turkish territory and movements of the Amir of Nejd.

December 1901—January 1902.

199. Having failed in their attempts to overawe the Sheikh of Koweit by attack on his town or by force, the Turks took another more practical step to force his hands. That was to starve his town—by prohibiting the export of

No. 248 of Secret E, March 1902, Nos. 127-337.



provisions to that place from Turkish territory. This was done by an irade of the Vali as reported by the Political Resident on 19th December 1901. In the opinion of Colonel Kemball this prohibition was a violation of the engagement to maintain the *status quo* at Koweit.

No. 249. 200. In reporting this fact (telegram of 22nd December) to the Secretary of State, His Excellency the Viceroy expressed his concurrence with Colonel Kemball.

No. 253. 201. Simultaneously we find the Amir of Nejd approaching Koweit, and on 22nd December he was reported to be within 5 hours' march from Jehara. This fact was communicated to the Secretary of State on 23rd December.

202. The Secretary of State telegraphed on 24th December as follows:—

"I have received Your Excellency's telegrams of 22nd and 23rd December 1901. De Bunsen has been directed to inform the Porte that the prohibition of supply of provisions to Koweit is breach of status quo upon which our assurance depends, and that if Koweit is attacked by Turkish or Amir's forces we shall use force."

203. The Porte disavowed the order in question and directed it to be rescinded.

No. 258. 204. From a telegram of the Political Resident, dated 25th December 1901, it appeared that the Amir had now left Hafer and gone to Safwan. It was believed that his intention was to collect Arabs belonging to Zobeir and Basrah for the purpose of attacking Koweit, and that probably he was encouraged by the Turkish authorities at Basrah. It was not likely that anything would be done during Ramzan. The senior naval officer had applied for reinforcements and the Political Resident thought that they should be sent, unless His Majesty's Government obtained satisfactory assurance from the Porte that the Amir of Nejd would be restrained and told to return to his own country.

No. 261. 205. On the 28th December it was reported that the Amir with part of his forces was 15 miles from Basrah and in constant communication with the Vali and the Mushir there. His Agent at Basrah sent him 70 tons of provisions.

206. These facts were duly communicated by wire to the Secretary of State, and in a telegram, dated 1st January 1902, His Excellency the Viceroy added:—

No. 263. "These constant alarms about Koweit, seem to justify stronger language at Constantinople than has yet been employed. It is obvious that their alleged authority over both is a farce, if the Turks can neither keep Nejd in check nor protect Koweit from attack."

XXV.—Dispute about the Fao Estates.

December 1901—January 1902.

207. In December 1901 another move was made by the Turkish officers at Basrah in order to intimidate the Sheikh of Koweit. They made the nephews of the Sheikh institute a suit against him in connection with what are called the Fao Estates, which brought the Sheikh a large income.

208. It would be useful here to explain briefly the exact points at dispute, as far as they could be ascertained by the Consul at Basrah.

109. The property in dispute consisted of date gardens at *Fao* and *Sofieh*,

No. 194 of Secret E., January 1904.

on the Shatt-Arab and other landed property at *Kut-i-Zeyn*, an island in the Shatt near Mohammerah, and *Gherdilan*, and *Ajerawiya*, on the borders of the Shatt.

110. There seemed to be no difference of opinion as regards *Kut-i-Zeyn* *Gherdilan* and *Ajerawiye*. These properties stood in the name of Mahomed Sabah, Mubarak's deceased brother, and were to be apportioned equally between Mubarak and the descendants of Mahomed and Jarrah; but Mubarak's mother became entitled to one-sixth of the share of Mahomed and Jarrah. The division would, therefore, be: one-third to Mubarak, and one-fourth to the heirs of Mahomed-es-Sabah, one-fourth to the heirs of Jarrah Sabah, and one-sixth to Mubarak's mother.

211. As regards *Fao* and *Sofieh*, the parties were at variance. According to Mubarak's contention, the *Fao* property only belonged to his grandfather Jaber,



and it was to be divided among the latter's descendants; but Ali, the son of Jaber, having disposed of his share to Daij, his collateral, whose descendants Mubarak now represented, and Ali's mother, the wife of Jaber, having been divorced and her three daughters forfeiting thereby all claim to inheritance, the portion of the estate accruing to Mubarak and the persons he represented was considerably larger than the opposite side was prepared to admit. According to the Sheikh's somewhat complicated computation, as given me by his lawyer, Fao was divided into 45 hoz (a local land measure); 12 belonged to Daij, deceased, whom Mubarak represents; 2 are divided into equal shares between Mubarak and the children of his brother Mahomed, deceased; 12 are divided among all the descendants of their grandfather and great grandfather Jaber, in ratios of two-fifths to the children of Mahomed and Jarrah, deceased, and three-fifths to Mubarak and the persons he represents; and of the remaining 19, one-fifth falls to the children of Mohamed and Jarrah, deceased, and four-fifths to Mubarak. The Sofieh property, according to the Sheikh's contention, belonged to his father Sabah, and was to be appropriated in ratios of two-fifths to the heirs of Mahomed and Jarrah and three-fifths to himself and the persons he represents. Reduced to ordinals of 100, Mubarak claimed that, of Jaber's property his side are entitled to $\frac{62}{100}$ and the other side $\frac{38}{100}$; and of Sabah's property, $\frac{75}{100}$ belong to his side and $\frac{25}{100}$ to the other.

212. The contention of the nephews and their party was briefly, that both Fao and Sofieh belonged to Jaber, and were inherited by his three sons, *Ali Daij* and *Sabah*, and their descendants in equal shares, and they claim, accordingly, $\frac{38}{100}$ of both these properties; that Ali's mother, the wife of Jaber, had been never divorced, and that her three daughters and their descendants are entitled to her inheritance; that the sons of Mahomed Sabah inherit from Ali Jaber in right of their mother, one of the Ali's daughters; that the children of Jarrah also inherit from Ali, in right of their mother, another of Ali's daughters; that the descendants of Mahomed and Jarrah had no share in Daij's inheritance; that Ali Jaber had not disposed of his share to Daij, and that the portion appropriated to the latter was therefore not as large as Mubarak asserted; that the children of Mahomed and Jarrah inherited from Sabah's share, in right of their respective fathers, Sabah's sons.

213. In January 1902, the Sheikh of Koweit received a notice dated 24th December from the Kazi of the Bidayet (Civil) Court of Basrah to the effect that Yusuf Diaf Effendi, attorney of the sons of the late Sheikh of Koweit, Mahomed, had filed a suit against him (Sheikh Mubarak) in connection with the family estates and that he should appear in person or by attorney.

214. This move the Sheikh believed was the result of the intrigues of his enemies at Basrah. Mr. Wratislaw thought that the Turkish authorities intended to use the claims of the Sheikh's nephew as a means of exerting pressure on him. Unfortunately his position in this respect was very vulnerable, as the estate in dispute was very valuable and was situated entirely within the jurisdiction of Turkish Courts.

215. The Chief of Koweit refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts and apparently wished that a court of arbitration of some respectable men of Basrah should be jointly nominated. Hamdi Pasha and Mohsin had written to the Sheikh on the subject but no agreement could be arrived at between the opposing parties as to the arbitrators.

216. To the summons of the Kazi of Basrah, dated 24th December 1901, Sheikh Mubarak replied that the Government of the Vilayet had made communications to him to which he had duly replied, and that he ought properly to receive orders from the Vilayet.

217. The Sheikh having failed to be present in Court, personally or by attorney, the judgment of the Court went by default against him and he was directed to hand over to his nephews the estate at Kutizoin between Basrah and Fao.



218. The Foreign Office was apprized of this by the Consul at Basrah through Sir N. O'Connor in his telegram dated 30th January 1902. His proposal was that the Sheikh should at once make "opposition" to the judgment and have the case re-heard. The Sheikh's idea seems to have been to ignore the legal proceedings and to get us to sight his case diplomatically.

219. His Majesty's Government however accepted Mr. Wratislaw's proposal and the Secretary of State telegraphed to the Government of India :—

"Instruct Kemball to strongly advise Sheikh of Koweit to make an opposition regarding Fao Estates before expiration at legal terms."

220. This advice was duly communicated by Colonel Kemball to Mubarak. In February 1902, he heard from Mr. Wratislaw that the Vali had advised the Sheikh's nephews to accept arbitration concerning the estates according to the trade of 1898, but that the nephews refused.

221. We shall leave this case for the present to see what other measures the Turks took to intimidate Sheikh Mubarak.

XXVI.—Occupation of Um-Kasr, Bubyah Island and Subbiyah by the Turks.

January—March 1902.

222. The Turks now turned their manœuvres in another direction, that was "to squeeze out the Sheikh of Koweit." They occupied positions round an inlet of the sea, which has the makings of one of the best, if not the best, harbour and naval station in the Persian Gulf. These places, Um-Kasr or Mungasser, and the Bubyah island are on the borderland between the undefined Turkish and Koweit territories at the west corner of the head of the Persian Gulf.

223. From the importance attached by Colonel Pelly to them in his valuable reports referred to above, it might have been expected that the German Railway Company and the Turks for them, would after failing to secure Koweit as a Railway terminus try to have a hold on Khor Abdullah. But they anticipated us by a timely movement of a small detachment of Turkish troops.

224. The first news of the movement was communicated to the Government of India by the First Assistant to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf from Bushire in a telegram, dated 21st January 1902, to the effect that a Turkish battalion had been moved from Sahwan to Umr.

225. The next news was a telegram from the Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf, confirming the above telegram. Um-Kasr as well as Safwan were claimed as his territory by the Sheikh of Koweit. The question was asked as to what was the boundary of Koweit. The Political Resident was asked by telegram, dated 31st January 1902, to answer this question. He replied :—

"Boundary of Koweit is quite uncertain and Wratislaw thinks that Sheikh's claims to Um-Kasr and Sahwan could not be maintained. When I last saw Sheikh, he told me Sahwan was his and bases his claims on fact that Bedouins there owe allegiance to him. Bedouins however always change their habitation and allegiance, and I doubt if Sheikh's claims to Sahwan at any rate could be maintained. There is no doubt, however, that movement of Turks is intended to frighten Mubarak and to cut him off from communication with Basrah."

226. In a later telegram, dated 4th February, Colonel Kemball proposed that the advance of the Turks to Um-Kasr should be objected to because (1) the Sheikh claimed it as his part to Basrah and (2) it might be made the terminus of the German Railway. He also proposed that in any case the further advance of the Turks should be prohibited, as they might advance near the sea. He suggested further that a gunboat might be sent to Khor Abdullah and Khor Subbiyah to ascertain facts.



227. In wiring this proposal to the Secretary of State His Excellency the
Viceroy observed—
No. 562.

"Kemball's proposal seems reasonable. It is for consideration whether Turks should not be pressed to withdraw troops from Koweit border. So long as they remain where they are we cannot withdraw our ships from Koweit."

228. The proposal to send the gun boat was approved. As to the other
proposal of His Excellency the Secretary
of State observed—
No. 563.

"It is not considered expedient without further information to demand withdrawal of Turkish troops, but O'Connor will inform Porte that forward movements of this kind are contrary to our understanding obliges us send gun boat to the locality."

229. Instructions to send a gun boat were issued by telegram to the Admiral on 13th February.

230. In his telegram, dated 9th February, Colonel Kemball reported that
according to the Sheikh's assertions,
Um-Kasr was occupied by a subject of
Koweit forty years ago and Sahwan (Safwan) was permanently occupied by
8 or 10 families, who had been there for 40 years and had paid some sort
of tribute to Koweit, and that both these places had been considered as
Koweit territory and had been never occupied by the Turks. The Resident
therefore proposed that the Turkish occupation of these places should be pro-
tested against.
No. 564.

231. This proposal was wired to the Secretary of State on 11th February.
The reply was—

"Foreign Office has intimated to O'Connor opinion that there are insufficient ground for protest."

232. We have to note then the following telegraphic correspondence on the
subject :—

Secret E.
July 1904.
Nos. 307-509.

(1) Telegram, dated the 24th February 1902.

No. 307.

From—The Admiral, Bombay,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

"Referring to your telegram 13th of February, No. 352-E-A., *Sphinx* went up Khor
Abdullah and reported Turks in occupation of
Sevwan and Um-Kasr and Aubi-yan. Senior
Officer reports chart very incorrect. Um-Kasr, which is opposite north-western corner of
Warba island, has the making of very good deep water harbour, and with greater facilities for
ships and possible terminus of railway than Koweit. Arabs considerably irritated at continued
advance of the Turks. Admiralty informed".
Secret E, July 1904, Nos. 307-509, correspondence cited.

(2) Telegram, dated the 25th February 1902.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

No. 308.

"Your telegram of the 13th February, Koweit. *Sphinx* has (arrived ?) and reports that
Turkish Officer with forty soldiers were at Um-Kasr, which is on the creek near head of Khot
Abdullah. Commander landed, and with permission of Turkish Officer visited his camp.
While he was there, some Arabs who were encamped about two miles distant approached and
Turks appeared to have thought attack was intended. Commander, however, re-assured both
sides and Arabs dispersed. On south-east of Bubyaa island a post of one officer and twenty
Turkish soldiers was found; they had been there fortnight, and evidently intend to occupy
place permanently, as brick house is being built. Full report will be sent by next mail but
meanwhile I do not think Turkish advance to Bubyaa can be viewed by us with equanimity.
The future importance of Khor Abdullah appears to be great, and it should be, I think, con-
sidered by us as within Koweit limits. It, with Bubyaa, is claimed by Mubarak, who is much
disturbed by Turkish occupation."

(Repeated to Secretary of State on 27th March.)

No. 310.



No. 316.

(3) Telegram, dated the 3rd March 1902.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

My telegram 25th February, Koweit. Mubarak claims Bubyen on grounds of his people occupying it annually for fishing and paying him rent. Turkey, if not checked, will probably next advance to Subbiya, and I think that they should be told leave Bubyen forthwith, even if occupation of Um Kasr cannot be protested against.

No. 319.

(Repeated to the Secretary of State on 7th March.)

(4) Telegram, dated the 12th March 1902.

From—The Secretary of State,
To—The Viceroy, Calcutta.

"O'Connor* reports arrival at Basrah of six infantry battalions, the Consul believes that further military posts, including one at Subbiya, are to be established towards Koweit. O'Connor understands that Koweit Sheikh claims that in favourable season his people cultivated land at Um-Kasr, and that Turkey did not exercise authority there till recent events; but he considers these arguments are weak, that it will be difficult to maintain with our present information that action of Ottoman authority in Bubyen or Um Kasr is disturbance of *status quo* at Koweit; consequently that we must be contented with maintenance of Sheikh's authority over Koweit, including *Bay and Kathama*. Foreign Office concurs. Your telegram of 7th March regarding Bubyen has been communicated to Foreign, but it is unlikely that their views will be altered by it."

(Repeated to the Admiral, Bombay, and Resident, Bushire, on 14th March.)

No. 335.

(5) Telegram, dated the 14th March 1902.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

My letter 42, 28th February, Koweit. Wratislaw telegraphs that occupation of Hejeje by the Turks has been decided upon. This place on Koweit side of Khor Subbiya, four miles north of Subbiya, and belongs to Mubarak, whom I have advised, at Wratislaw's suggestion, to occupy it at once. I hear he has sent forty men there. It is very important that Turkish advance should be stopped.

No. 339.

(6) Telegram, dated the 14th March 1902.

From—The Admiral, Bombay,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

Senior Officer, Persian Gulf, reports on authority of Resident in the Persian Gulf that Turks occupy Hejeje four miles north of Subbiya, seven from mouth of Khor Abdullah on Koweit side, Sheikh's territory. Sheikh is sending forty men there immediately to forestall Turks on Resident in the Persian Gulf's advice, with orders to remain there unless forced to quit, but on no account to engage in acts of hostility. This further considerable encroachment is very serious. *Spahin* at Bushire could proceed to spot, if desired. Admiralty informed.

No. 340.

* (7) Telegram, dated the 14th March 1902.

From—The Secretary of State, London,
To—The Viceroy, Calcutta.

My telegram of 12th March, Koweit. Foreign Office whilst concurring in O'Connor's views, agree to his suggestion that Porte should be informed *that we cannot admit, without further enquiry, that occupation of Um-Kasr and Bubyen is not a disturbance of status quo and that we do not regard the Sheikh's rights as in any way prejudiced by action of Turkish authority in matter.*

(Repeated Political Resident, Bushire; Admiral, Bombay, on 17th March.)

No. 343.

(8) Telegram No. 592-9-A, dated 17th March 1902.

From—The Viceroy, Calcutta,
To—The Secretary of State, London.

Your telegram 14th March, Koweit. Kemball telegraphs 14th—*Begin*: Wratislaw's telegraphs * * * advance should be stopped. *Ends*. I propose to send *Spahin* to spot to watch events. Do you approve?

* *Vide Appendix I.*



With reference 7th instant *Sphinx* when visiting Khar Subbiya found Subbiya occupied by Mubarak's men. *Therefore advance of Turks to Hejeje and Subbiya can hardly be regarded other than as disturbance of status quo, whatever view is held about Um-Kasr.*

(9) Telegram P., dated 27th March 1902.

No. 349.

From—The Secretary of State,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Calcutta.

Admiralty communicates reports that Kemball has advised Sheikh of Koweit to occupy Hejeje in order to forestall Turkey. Foreign Office considers that advice of questionable expediency and doubts whether Turkish advance to Hejeje can be called encroachment.

(10) Telegram, dated the 15th March 1902.

No. 496.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

"My telegram of 14th March, Koweit. Wratislaw telegraphs that all the Turkish Sappers in Basrah, about eighty in number, are ordered to leave for Fao and thence most of them to Bubiyan. Your telegram 14th March has been received. Sheikh will, I fear, be much concerned at the decision to allow Bubiyan to remain in possession of Turks. He considers his right to this place undoubted, and its occupation by Turks will make his position as Sheikh Koweit more difficult. His loyalty to us has, I believe, not been entirely popular in Koweit, and there is Turkish party in place whose influence will increase as Sheikh's position becomes more difficult. He is, I believe, firm, ready and anxious to remain loyal to us, but as matters are now going he may be forced to make terms with Turks who are apparently working with this end in view. Turkish advances have, it seems to me, altered *status quo* in that position; Sheikh is thereby affected and his authority at Koweit weakened. Further, it will be essential, so far as I can see, for our ships of war to remain indefinitely if our hold over Sheikh is to be maintained. It is advisable that I should receive instructions whether Koweit shores of Khor Subah may be considered within Sheikh's limits. Sheikh has been advised not to actively oppose Turks if they advance to Hejeje, which is practically same place as Subah, but to leave settlement of the question of his frontier with us. Subah is seven miles distant from mouth of Khor, and we may, in view of recent decision, not consider ourselves able to maintain Sheikh's authority over it.

O'Connor has been instructed to remonstrate against the advance as tending to disturb the country and impeding our effort, in accordance with agreement with Porte, to keep Sheikh quiet."

233. Upon this His Excellency the Viceroy repeated the Political Resident's message of 15th March (above quoted) to the Secretary of State as also another one about the decision of the Basrah Court in regard to the Fao estates and observed:—

No. 350.

"These telegrams crossed your telegram of 14th. Your telegram of 17th since received. Views of Foreign Office appear to us unsound: and, unless Sheikh is to be squeezed out altogether, it seems essential to retain for him Koweit shores of Khor Subah. It is serious enough that he should lose Bubiyan Island; but if Hejeje and Subah are to go too, Kathama-Bay will follow suit and Turks will be in immediate vicinity of Koweit. In these circumstances Sheikh will have no alternative except to make terms with Turks, and our entire policy will be nullified. Advance of Turks is unquestionable violation of *status quo*, since they have never before been in places now being occupied. Should we not, therefore, inform both Turks and Sheikh that Koweit shores of Khor Subah are considered to be within Sheikh's limits and that encroachment will not be permitted?"

No. 350.

234. On 24th March the Secretary of State telegraphed:—

"His Majesty's Government are considering* the whole question of Koweit, and are addressing the Porte on the subject. Pending a decision instruct Kemball to do nothing, by advice or otherwise, to encourage Sheikh to occupy positions beyond those now held by him."

235. These instructions were duly repeated to the Political Resident.

* *Vide Appendix I.*



236. On 25th March Colonel Kemball telegraphed :—

"I hear from Gaskin that Muhammad Abdul Wahab, who has lately returned to
Bahrein from El Hassa, told him that Governor
No. 392. of that place has received a letter from Wali,
Basrah, to the effect that Turkish Government has abandoned idea of making Kasima
terminus German Railway. Um-Kasr has been chosen instead."

237. On the same day Colonel Kemball again telegraphed that he had

learned that the Turks would very soon
occupy Subbya in spite of presence of
No. 393. Sheikh's men.

238. In his letter No. 42, dated the 28th February 1902, Colonel Kemball

reported as promised in his telegram of
No. 343. 25th February 1902 :—

"The Senior Naval Officer has been good enough to furnish me with a map, herewith
submitted, showing the position of the various localities. The place Um-Kasr is evidently the
place mentioned by Colonel Pelly, *vide* paragraph 128 of his letter No. 67, dated 18th April
1863, as Moom Gussar, a small port, "situated at the head of the Khor Abdullah near Bunder
Zobair," which was formerly occupied by the progenitors of the Sheikhs of Koweit and from
which they were, according to Colonel Pelly, expelled by the Bassorah authorities, now nearly
300 years ago. Mubarak, however, informed me that it was more recently occupied by Koweit
people in the time of his grandfather Sheikh Jabar, and the fact of the ruins of what was
apparently a fort then remaining seemed to bear this out. In paragraph 135 of the same
letter Colonel Pelly stated : "Koweit has a fine broad channel of creek water running from
its bay up to within 12 miles of the Basreh point of the river. I landed close alongside the
Zobair Bunder in four fathoms ; and this was the least water I found in a mid-channel of an
average width of one mile from the Koweit end of the creek up to its head within sight of the
date trees of the Shat-el-Arab near Basreh. The cutting of the canal across these 12 miles of
flat soil would be a work of little cost and labour." Our existing charts of this locality
appeared to be very incomplete and I had hitherto been unable to clearly understand Colonel
Pelly's meaning. The broad channel of creek water up which Colonel Pelly went, must, I
think, be the Khor Subbiya which leads directly into the Zobair creek, on which Um-Kasr is.
The remarks made by Colonel Pelly in paragraph 20 of his report No. 57, dated 15th May
1866, regarding the Khor Abdullah and Zobair creek, and the possibilities of the latter place in
connection with a railway line to the Mediterranean, are also of great interest.

I have already reported to the Government of India that both Safwan and Um Kasr are
claimed by the Sheikh of Koweit as within his territory. With regard to Safwan, I am not in
a position to form an opinion, but it seems to me that his claim to Um-Kasr may be more
valid. It has been, I understand, for very many years an uninhabited spot, and has been
used by Koweit people as a port for Bassorah. At any rate, even if Mubarak's claims to the
place are very strong, the Turkish claim would not appear to be much stronger, and the recent
occupation by them would seem to be a breach of the *status quo*.

With regard to Bubiyan island, the establishment of a Turkish post on this island at the
entrance to the Khor Abdullah cannot, I think, be viewed with equanimity by us. Mubarak
has written to me on the subject of this place, and states that the island, like Failaka Island,
belongs to him, and that the Avazem tribe who are subject to him have been living there since
the occupation of Koweit. This tribe, he says, have fishing enclosures there, and reside on
the island for seven months during the summer."

239. In his letter No. 60, dated 16th March 1902, Colonel Kemball made

further remarks in continuation of his tele-
gram of 16th March 1902 :—
No. 395.

"With regard to Um Kasr it is true that the claim made by the Sheikh is not particu-
larly strong : it would perhaps be correct to consider the place as sort of no-man's land,
which, as explained in my letter No. 42, dated 28th February, appears to have had some kind
of connection with Koweit, but where Turkish authority has not hitherto been exercised.
Bubiyan Island is, I understand, a low-lying mud flat, uninhabited and probably uninhabitable,
but which, the Sheikh of Koweit states, is resorted to for fishing purposes during the summer
months by the tribe owing allegiance to him. Taking these facts into consideration and
admitting that the Sheikh's claim to ownership of these places independently of Turkey may
not be very strong, I do not think that it therefore follows that the *status quo* at Koweit has not
been disturbed by the recent occupation of these places by the Turks. The advance of Turkish
troops is viewed by Sheikh Mubarak with great concern : his prestige as Sheikh of Koweit has
undoubtedly been thereby diminished, and it appears to me that his position as an independ-
ent ruler will be considerably weakened. The Government of India will be aware that when
the Nakib of Basrah recently visited Koweit, the Sheikh was evidently wavering in his mind
and considering whether it would not be to his interest to make the best terms he could with
the Turks. The crisis was then averted owing to the presence at Koweit of His Majesty's ships



of war and the support which was given to the Sheikh who maintained his loyalty to his agreement with His Majesty's Government. Now, however, his position has again become difficult? the Turkish advances are apparently intended to constitute a direct menace to Koweit and Basrah and presumably must affect adversely the interests of the people of Koweit and consequently diminish the popularity of the Sheikh while strengthening the hands of his enemies. Clearly therefore, it seems to me, if we wish to maintain our hold over Koweit, the presence of His Majesty's ships at Koweit as a direct support to the Sheikh must be continued for an indefinite period. The Government of India will, I am sure, understand that I have no desire to criticise the decision to which His Majesty's Government have come with regard to the occupation of these places by the Turks, but I feel it incumbent on me to lay before the Government my views as to the effect which is likely to result from the Turkish movements and of the alteration on the *status quo* which has, in my opinion, actually taken place.

From the information which has reached me from His Majesty's Consul at Basrah, and which was embodied in my telegram of the 13th March, regarding the expected despatch of Turkish sappers to Bubiyan, it is, I think, evident that the importance of the Khor Abdullah has been recognized by the Turks.

With regard to the place Hejeje referred to in my telegram, dated the 14th March, I am informed by the Senior Naval Officer that this place is on the Koweit side of the Khor Subbiya four miles north of Subbiya and seven miles from the mouth of the Khor. The Sheikh states that some of his people always live there, and that the place belongs to him, though it was apparently deserted when Commander Kemp recently visited the Khor in His Majesty's ship "*Sphinx*." Mubarak has, in accordance with my advice, occupied the place, and it seems improbable that the Turks will advance in the direction if they find the place already occupied. The Sheikh's claim to this place and also to Subbiya, independently of his relations with Turkey, may perhaps be not much stronger than his claims to Um-Kasr and Bubiyan, but their occupation by the Turks would undoubtedly cause him great anxiety, and I am of opinion that his claims to them should be upheld. It must be remembered that Mubarak has in deference to the advice of the naval authorities promised not to add to the complications of the situation by offering any active opposition to the Turkish advance, and that otherwise the Turkish posts at Um Kasr and Bubiyan might not have been left unmolested. This fact may perhaps enable His Majesty's Government to warn the Porte while there is yet time that the Koweit shore of the Khor Subah must not be encroached upon."

240. After considering the question,* the Secretary of State telegraphed on No. 395. the 26th March:—

"Instructions have been sent to O'Connor to address Porte in following sense regarding Koweit:—*Begins.*—His Majesty's Government have acknowledged Koweit to be part of the Ottoman dominions, and do not desire to encourage Sheikh to throw off allegiance to the Sultan. They are, however, bound to support him against encroachment, but are not disposed to raise irritating discussion about movements of Turkish troops to places to which Sheikh's title would be difficult to prove. *They do not wish to obstruct prolongation of Bagdad Railway to Gulf, whether at Koweit or elsewhere; but their assistance is conditional upon British capital receiving at least equal shares with any other powers in respect of construction, materials and management.* This condition is based upon the necessity for British financial co-operation and on predominant British interests in commerce of Gulf, which has been opened in the past and must in future be safeguarded by British efforts. British co-operation will be necessary to secure good-will of Koweit Sheikh and to restrain piracy at whatever arrive (? approach) the terminus may be placed. *Ends.*"

240-A. The communication made by Sir N. O'Connor to the Porte was reported by him in his Despatch dated 28th March (*vide* Appendix I.)

241. His Excellency the Viceroy then wired to the Secretary of State on No. 396. 29th March 1902:—

"Your telegram of 26th March, Koweit. We do not understand policy of His Majesty's Government. Does acknowledgment of Koweit as part of Ottoman dominions involve abandonment of position hitherto taken up, and defined in Lord Lansdowne's letter† to Sir F. Lascelles of 12th September 1901, as one in large measure of practical independence, and by O'Connor in his letter to Lord Lansdowne of 10th September† 1901? Further, when intention is declared of supporting Sheikh against encroachment, what encroachment and where is it meant? Are we to resist the Turkish advance on Koweit side of Khor Subah? These questions may assume practical shape at any moment, and we shall be grateful for more explicit instructions, since *status quo* is in danger of being whittled out of existence."

242. In reply the Secretary of State in his telegram, dated 8th April 1902, explained the meaning of their message of 26th March:—

"Foreign Office points out that no new departure was indicated by instructions to O'Connor of 24th March. What was contemplated was merely to preface statement of the view of His

* *Vide* Appendix I.

† *Vide* Appendix H.



Majesty's Government by admitting, not by any means for the first time, that Koweit is within Turkish Empire subject to all qualifications upon which His Majesty's Government have throughout insisted as to unsubstantial character of the Sultan's authority and reality of large measure of independence always claimed for Sheikh. As a matter of fact, O'Connor, in subsequent interview with Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister, did not refer to *status quo* of Koweit, but His Majesty's Government while adhering to position taken up in despatch to Lascelles of 12th September 1902, cannot, in view of admission above referred to, support O'Connor's statement in despatch of 12th September 1902, in which he rejected Sultan's suzerainty. They desire to maintain *status quo* at Koweit and to preserve Sheikh's privileges and territories. These, however, are insufficiently defined, specially territories, and His Majesty's Government desire, firstly, to avoid entanglement in doubtful disputes, and, secondly, to have it understood that their rights and policy in Persian Gulf do not depend upon their shadowy connection with Koweit, but upon other and broader considerations, and that, in order to establish claim to have voice in such questions as that of railway terminus, it is not necessary to prove that proposed location is within Koweit territory."

243. In a letter dated 19th April 1902, Sheikh Mubarak complained to the Political Resident that the Turkish soldiers were still at Bubyar, Safwan and Um Kasr. As regards Bubyar, he stated that his subjects would go to the place to resume their fishing occupation. Safwan also would be visited by his tribesmen with their flocks after a fortnight, but the presence of Turkish soldiers would frighten them. He also mentioned that 30 Turkish soldiers tried to occupy Amayer island—which is north of Katif—but that the Arabs of the place did not allow them to land. This island appears to be the same as the island in the Musalamiyah Bay, about 70 miles north of Katif. The report of the attempted occupation of this island was telegraphed by the Naval Commander-in-Chief to London. The Secretary of State wished to know the particulars. The Political Resident reported by telegram, dated 7th May, that the Sheikh of Koweit claimed the island; but that it was clearly within the sphere of Turkish influence and that the Sheikh's claims could not be supported.

XXVII.—Turkish complaints against the proceedings of British officers and the Sheikh of Koweit, March 1902.

244. On the 14th of March 1902, the Turkish Ambassador in London called the attention of the Foreign Office to certain reports in regard to affairs in the neighbourhood of Koweit:—

245. These reports were to the effect—

that officers of His Majesty's Navy had placed three flagstuffs at Djézire close to the landing-stage at Adjiri (Ajeir) and made demonstrations on board a steam boat in that neighbourhood,

that the forces of Sheikh Mubarak had intercepted the communications between Basrah and Nejd with the intention of invading Katif, and had cut off the Turkish detachment at Karr, while British man-of-war was anchored off that place.

that His Majesty's Consul at Bahrein had given a public warning of the presence of Arab tribes at Adjiri in consequence of which trading vessels had been obliged to disembark their cargoes at Bahrein.

246. With regard to the proceedings in the neighbourhood of Adjiri, it appears that in the course of operations conducted by a surveying vessel of the Government of India the *Investigator*, three bamboo poles with flags were temporarily placed as marks on the coast north of Adjiri for the purpose of a survey by triangular observations connected with Bahrein, and that the demonstration referred to by the Turkish Ambassador was to be explained by the landing of an officer from the ship to make the observations necessary to complete the triangular connection between the coast and that island. These operations were entirely confined to scientific investigations of general interest and to a particular portion of the coast south of Katif. The Political Resident was advised under instructions from the Secretary of State to warn the Commander of the *Investigator* to use caution and avoid misunderstanding. He was, however,



directed to complete the operations commenced, provided landmarks were not placed on the mainland.

247. The reported action of the forces of the Sheikh of Koweit for the purpose of intercepting the communications between Basrah and Nejd would appear to have been founded on the circumstance that certain raids had been made by Arab tribes on the territory of the Amir of Nejd. His Majesty's Government had already warned Sheikh Mubarak against encouraging any such proceedings, and they were again assured by him that he had had nothing to do with these enterprises. The recent visit of one of His Majesty's ships to the neighbourhood of Um Kasr, was entirely unconnected with these raids.

**XXVIII.—Sheikh Mubarak's offers of reconciliation with the Porte,
March 1902.**

248. The constant measures taken by the Turkish authorities at Basrah to harass the Sheikh—appear to have shaken his spirits. For we find him in March 1902 offering a bribe said to amount £10,000 through a Turkish officer, Mohamad Beg Mustafa Noursi Pasha, Vali of Basrah, in order to induce him to make favourable representations to the Sultan, put a stop to the Turkish encroachments on his territory and generally to reconcile him with the Sultan. The Vali appeared to have refused the bribe, and asked him why he had sought British protection. The Sheikh replied that this was done for his own self preservation against the attacks of Ibn Rashid, since the Turkish Government had refused to help him.

XXIX.—Arrest of the agent of Sheikh Mubarak at Basrah and his imprisonment.

May—December 1902.

249. On 28th May of 1902, Abdul Aziz, agent of the Sheikh of Koweit at Basrah, was arrested by order of the Sultan on the pretext that he had received and forwarded to the Sheikh a prohibited Arabic newspaper called "Khilafat" published in London. It was reported that his papers were also seized including title deeds connected with the Fao estates. The Sheikh was at the time at Mohammerah in connection with a piracy committed on one of Koweit boats.

No. 489.
He asked the Wali of Basrah the reason of the arrest, and received the reply that it was the Irade of the Sultan. The Sheikh then applied to the Resident through Mr. Wratislaw for permission to appeal direct to the Sultan. The Secretary of State was asked for instructions. The reply was:—

"Please instruct Resident at Bushire to inform Sheikh that in reply to the representations made, Tewtek Pasha promises that if facts were correctly represented, he would urge the Grand Vizier to order restitution of the title deed to Sheikh, Lord Lansdowne sees no objection to Sheikh's addressing the Sultan direct, if he wishes to do so."

250. Abdul Aziz was examined by a special commission and committed for trial for felony.

251. The Sheikh of Koweit attributed the arrest of his agent to his having accepted British protection and asked therefore for British intervention to obtain the agent's release. Mr. DeBunsen, who was consulted, was however of opinion that a demand for his release would not be likely to be attended with success, and proposed to inform the Sublime Porte that His Majesty's Government regarded the continued detention of the Sheikh of Koweit's agent as an act of persecution directed against a chief with whom they stood in friendly relation. This proposal was approved by His Majesty's Government in August 1902.

No. 163 of Secret E., February 1903, Nos. 160-307.
Nos. 164, 168, and 169 of Do.



252. On the 26th August Mr. Wratislaw reported that Abdul Aziz had been sentenced by the criminal court of Basrah to ten years' imprisonment in a fort. Mr. Wratislaw believed that the evidence against him was clear and convincing.

253. This sentence was afterwards confirmed by the Court of Cassation at Constantinople, and orders issued for carrying out the sentence.

XXX.—Further movements of Ibn Rashid (2) Ibn Saud in the field again and captures Riadh.

January—November 1902.

254. In the beginning of January 1902, the Amir of Nejd was within 3 miles of Zobeir. He left the place soon after, when a Turkish battalion moved there. It seems that the Amir was anxious to get permission from the Turkish Government to attack Koweit. But evidently the Turks would not let him have the sole credit and profit of taking Koweit and of occupying it with his forces, when the Porte might find it impossible to get rid of him. On the other hand the Turks would not, for fear of complications with the British, venture themselves to take the lead in an attack of Koweit with the Amir of Nejd co-operating with them by a land blockade. The Turks were probably at this time trying some indirect means to reduce Koweit to subjection rather than a direct attack. We shall note below what these measures were. Meanwhile the Amir was reported to be moving to his own capital. He was paid by the Porte 4,000*l*. Mr. Wratislaw supposed that this payment was made in order to induce him to return to Nejd. Possibly it was to meet his charges in another direction.

255. For at this time important developments were taking place in Nejd Mubarak was much concerned in the events, though he acted secretly. He had been warned under instructions from the Government of India (telegram, dated), that he should not allow his partizans to raid the Amir's territory. But he could not restrain (even if he wished) the Ibn Saud's party from making attempts to regain their power in Nejd. Abdul Aziz, son of Abdul Rahman bin Feysal made bold attempts to regain the power in Nejd lost by his family. His Bedouin partizans made raids into Nejd and gained over to his side several tribes in Hasa. In order to counteract the influence of Abdul Aziz in Hasa the Amir deputed one Saad-ul-Hazemi with letters from himself and the Vali of Basrah to Sheikh Pasim-bin-Thani with a view to his assistance for gaining over the tribes. It was even rumoured (see Mr. Gaskin's report, dated 23rd February 1902) that the Porte had entrusted the entire control of all the Arab tribes in Nejd, Koweit, Hasa and Katar districts to the Amir. He was given a free hand in organizing within these districts expeditions against refractory tribes, the Turkish officials in Hasa and Katar were to give him every assistance and were to have no authority beyond the walls of the towns in which they resided. The Turks also took measures to strengthen their garrisons in Katar and Hasa.

256. Meanwhile Abdul Aziz made a bold march to Riadh and captured it by surprise. The following translation of an account in Arabic written by the Assistant Political Agent, Bahrein, will be read with interest :—

"In the month of Ramzan, while at the village of Waisa near Hasa, Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman devised a plan of going to Riadh, but he did not acquaint his followers with the project. He told them that on 5th of Shawal he would lead a marauding expedition against the Bedouins of Nejd, and all the Arabs prepared themselves accordingly. He, however, left with 80 followers on the 26th Ramzan, or ten days before the fixed date, for the south so as to put the people off the scent, and no one could surmise what would be his ultimate destination.



On the 14th Shawal, at dead of night, he arrived and encamped at a distance of 1½ hours' march from Riadh. Here he divulged the real object of his expedition to his followers, and invited those who favoured his scheme to follow him, giving others the option of leaving if they elected to do so; but they all unanimously promised him their cordial support and declared that they would not forsake him to the last. From this camp they all proceeded on foot under cover of the night to a date grove in close proximity to the city walls, where Abdul Aziz ordered the main portion of his party to wait for his orders, meanwhile he would go and find out a place to serve as an ambuscade until daybreak, which would be a more convenient opportunity for their attack as the palace would be easily accessible during the day. His followers, however, were averse to his going, and suggested that some one else should be sent instead, but Abdul Aziz told them that it was imperative for their ends that he should see to it personally. He accordingly left with eight picked men belonging to the Jalwi family, his brother and some of his special retainers, leaving the rest in the date grove to await his instructions and with orders not to load their gun lest one of them might go off and warn the inmates of the garden of their presence. And Providence led his foot-steps to a house adjoining that of Ajlan, the owner of which was known to him, and he knocked at the door. This took place at eight hours after nightfall. The owner of the house asked who he was and what he wanted, and Abdul Aziz in reply gave the name of a certain retainer of Bin Rashid's who was known to the owner of the house, adding that he was sent there by Ajlan to call him because a messenger had arrived from the Amir and Ajlan wanted him immediately. Upon this the house owner flung the door open, and Abdul Aziz at once seized him and put a dagger to his throat, and having informed him that he was Abdul Aziz, bade him be quiet, failing which he would be killed. Abdul Aziz ordered his men to stop the woman from raising an alarm, and at once sent a member of the Jalwi family to summon his troops, who all came and joined him without attracting any attention. After this Abdul Aziz went to the house of Ajlan, caught hold of his wife and threatened her with death unless she kept quiet. Some of the followers of Abdul Aziz now entered Ajlan's house, while the rest remained in the adjoining house. Abdul Aziz then enquired and learnt from Ajlan's wife that he generally returned from the palace at one hour after sunrise.

The gates of Ajlan's house and the palace face each other. When the time for Ajlan's return drew near they opened the wicket in the gates and took their horses out in the sun, and half an hour after this Ajlan left the palace for his house but was intercepted by Abdul Aziz. He at once retreated, making for the palace, but Abdul Aziz overtook him before he could enter the gates and slew him on his threshold. Abdul Aziz then seized the gates and his followers immediately entered the palace and killed all its inmates. According to authentic news, Ajlan, his brother and fourteen others fell in this small action, and the palace with a quantity of arms and ammunition together with a number of horses fell into the hands of Abdul Aziz. The townspeople were not aware of the advent of Abdul Aziz until after they heard the reports of the guns. Abdul Aziz then posted himself on the top of the palace and announced to the people that Bin Saud had re-conquered his country and visaged all who professed to be pacific to give their arms. He subsequently summoned them to the palace and addressed them on the misrule of Bin Rashid and on the leniency and kindness of the previous rulers belonging to his own family, and they all entered into covenant with him and he commenced the fortification of the walls and the fort, the palace having been already thoroughly fortified by Bin Rashid.

The people of Nejd, Bedouins as well as settled residents, are all unanimously in favour of Bin Saud and would readily uphold his cause as soon as they are convinced that he is sufficiently strong. Bin Rashid's Walis have been expelled from some of the villages, and most have abandoned their posts and gone to join Bin Rashid. It is reported the people of Hareek have turned out Bin Rashid's Wali and the revenue of Kharj has been paid to Abdul Aziz.

The Arab Sheikhs have all flocked round Abdul Aziz, and it is reported that an emissary from the Shaibance has gone to the Ataiba to tell the latter of the former's intention to join them. The Bin Humaid, the Bin Rabian, the Bin Hadlan, the Zabeit and the Sabail are the sub-sections of the Ataiba and have concentrated at (the Ataiba) head-quarters. These are the most powerful Bedouins in Nejd, and most of them are opposed to Bin Rashid. It is possible that they may number about 5,000 horse all told (besides a considerable number of foot). The Dowasir, the Arji, the Sabea, the Soohood and the Shamer Arabs are all opposed to Bin Rashid and have gone to join Bin Saud, with whom are also the Ajmad, the Murrah and the Mutair; and the remaining nomadic Bedouins of Nejd, viz., the Shammer, the Horb, the Zafeet, the Khatan and the Buraid, who are the only Arabs favourable to Bin Rashid, are watching the turn of events and would cast in their lots with the stronger party, but the Shammer are Bin Rashid's own tribe."

257. The rising in Nejd against Ibn Rashid was one, which apparently he was unable to cope with, and it was reported that about the middle of March he had sent an envoy to Basrah, asking for help against the rebels and Abdul Aziz. No answer appears to have been given at the time to the Amir's request.

He also wrote to the Sultan accusing the English of seeking to establish themselves with the aid of the Sheikh of Koweit in portions of Arabia which dominate Turkish possessions in Kalif and Hasan.

No. 20 of Secret E., October 1902, Nos. 11-41.

No. 282,



258. In the beginning of April, Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal appears to have left Riadh for the purpose of attacking the tribes attached to Ibn Rashid. He fell in with the Sabtan tribe at Al-Mejuam and completely routed them.

No. 482 of Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 307-509.

259. About this time Ibn Saud approached the British officers with a proposal for British protection. At the end of December 1901, Abdur Rahman had an interview with the Russian Consul of Bushire, who had offered military assistance to him on certain conditions. But he was dissuaded by Sheikh Mubarak from accepting the offer of assistance. He now sought British protection, as the safest means to save himself from the intrigues of the Turkish Government who had espoused the cause of Ibn Rashid.

No. 39 of Secret E., October 1902, Nos. 11-41.

260. On 11th of May 1904, Abdul Rahman-bin-Faysal left Koweit to join his victorious son at Riadh, accompanied by the leading men of the Ajman and al-Morra tribes.

261. On the 31st July 1902, Mr. Wratislaw reported that Ibn Rashid was making energetic preparations for a campaign against Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul Rahman bin Feysul as soon as weather permitted. He had endeavoured to detach some of the tribes from Ibn Saud by proclaiming that the cutler was only a tool of the English, who wished to make themselves masters of Arabia.* Mr. Wratislaw also reported that it was notorious that Mubarak was aiding and abetting Ibn Saud, and that hostilities between Ibn Rashid, with the Turks in sympathy with him, and the Sheikh of Koweit were unavoidable.

No. 27 of Secret E., October 1902, Nos. 11-41.

262. In August a fight took place between Ibn Rashid's men and the Sheikh's people at a place called Subbyah, 10 hour's journey from Koweit.

No. 37 of correspondence cited.

263. In August, Ibn Rashid had reached and occupied Boreider, which belongs to the Kasim tribe. He also occupied Vishker, which belongs to the Vasham of Nejd. It was expected that there would be a serious fight between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid at an early date. It was later on reported that Riadh had been captured by Ibn Rashid. But this news turned out to be false, as was found from the accounts received subsequently.

264. In a letter dated 21st November the Senior Naval Officer reported facts that came to his notice while on a visit to Koweit during the month:—

"On the 18th November, Sheikh Mubarak received a letter from Abdul Aziz Bin Saud to say that, after a long engagement, he had defeated Bin Rashid, the Amir of Nejd, at a place called Dellum, which is about one day's march south of Riadh. Bin Rashid lost over 250 killed, and was pursued in a north-westerly direction for five days by Abdul Aziz, who captured many horses, camels, tents, etc. Bin Rashid was now supposed to be at Ghassib (?), which is about 11 days' march north-west of Riadh. Abdul Aziz, the son of Abdul Rahman Bin Feysul who had captured Riadh, in January 1902, had since then with his brother, Mahomet, and his father been collecting their forces. Abdul Rahman it was believed was most friendly with the Sheikh of Koweit, with whom he was living up to January 1902; and if Bin Rashid, the present Amir of Nejd, were entirely crushed, the position of Koweit would be much strengthened, for it was doubtful if the Turks would ever attempt to interfere with that place if they knew that the Arabs in Nejd would support Koweit, as it would probably jeopardise their position at Hasa and Katif. Mahomed Bin Saud, the second son of Abdul Rahman Bin Feysul, had been at Koweit in November, but left for Riadh about 6th November. Mubarak, while owning that Mohamed had come north with the object of securing the assistance of various Arab tribes, denied that he personally gave him any reinforcements. This assertion on the Sheikh's part was doubtful, as the townspeople declared that Mahomet not only received a considerable force of riflemen, but actually attacked the Shunman tribe who own allegiance to Bin Rashid, and brought the looted camels, etc., into Jehara (west end of Koweit harbour). Although Mubarak had been warned by the Political Resident not to take any part in the present quarrel, it was likely that his sympathy with Abdul Rahman Bin Feysul would be shown more in an active than a passive manner; for if his enemy, the Amir of Nejd, got the best of this quarrel, he would most probably again turn his attention to Koweit."

Enclo. Pro. 48 on Secret E., April 1903, Nos. 23-70.



265. Mr. Gaskin reported on 17th November 1902 that he had received authentic information to the effect that on the 1st November Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul Rahman attacked the Amir of Nejd near a place called Mohamedi in Southern Nejd and defeated him with great slaughter and took his camp with its equipment on the 4th November. When the messengers left Abdul Aziz with news of his victory, he was at Birashi, pursuing the Amir.

266. It appears that Abdul Aziz had left Riyadh on the way to Kharj, and the Amir hearing of his departure sent his cavalry to attack Riyadh whose horsemen went out and repulsed the attack. The Amir went in pursuit of Abdul Aziz, taking the village of Silmia, and when he encamped at Dillam, its inhabitants and those of the surrounding villages attacked him and caused him to move his camp and then went over to join Abdul Aziz at Hanta. Abdul Aziz on hearing of the approach of the Amir went out with the fighting men to Hanta and Harik and the whole of the Dawasir tribesmen to the place called Mohamedi where he encamped for three days to rest his men and give time to his other adherents to come up, and finally the two belligerents met near Mohamedi and fought a battle in which the Amir was defeated with heavy slaughter and retreated northwards abandoning his camp to the victors. One of the Amir's standards taken by Abdul Aziz had been sent to Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit.

XXXI.—(1) Fear of renewal of hostilities between Ibn Rashid and Sheikh Mubarak—(2) The Sheikh warned not to involve himself in difficulties with Nejd or the Turks.—(3) Application of the Sheikh for guns.

August—October 1902.

267. In August 1902, there was a fear that the tide of victory was turning in favour of Ibn Rashid and that he would capture Riyadh. If these fears were realized (they were not, as we found) it was thought likely that Sheikh Mubarak would send assistance to his friend Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud. The Secretary of State in the circumstances telegraphed as follows:—

"Wratislaw reports probability of renewed hostilities between Ibn Rashid and Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud. Please instruct Kemball to warn Mubarak against encouraging any action likely to involve him in difficulties with Nejd or with Turkish Government."

268. Meanwhile Sheikh Mubarak was evidently alarmed on learning of the successes of Ibn Rashid, and in August 1902 applied for two or three guns—one of which should be quick-firing. These guns he wished to place in the fort at Jehara to defend his town against attacks from the Ibn Rashid or Sheikh Yusuf-el-Ibrahim, who threatened to make an attack on that side. The fear was that the Sheikh might use the guns for offensive operations. He had heard that Ibn Rashid had received one gun from five guns and that he had asked the Turkish Government why he should not have guns likewise from the British Government, and why he should not use them in the same manner as Ibn Rashid.

269. Government were, however, averse to the Sheikh meddling in internal Arabian affairs and were afraid he would use the guns in offensive operations. There were moreover other considerations to be taken into account.

270. His Excellency the Viceroy therefore wired to the Secretary of State on 3rd October 1902—

"Kemball has been instructed to warn Mubarak as in your telegram, 22nd September. With letter, dated 6th September, Kemball forwards request from Mubarak for gift of two or three guns which, it is understood, are wanted for Jehara Fort to protect Koweit against land attack (vide letter from Captain Field to Admiral of 24th September 1901, sent with Secretary's letter, 21st November). Mubarak mentions that Ibn Rashid has with him a gun presented to him by Turks, and report received through Bahrain says Ibn Rashid has 5 guns. I presume answer should be that Mubarak's request cannot be met, but

that, provided he complies with injunctions conveyed to him in pursuit of your telegram of 4th December 1901, His Majesty's Government will charge themselves with defence of Koweit districts—see Lord Lansdowne's memorandum of 21st March 1902. Please telegraph whether you have any further directions, and whether this is approved."

No. 188.

271. The Secretary of State approved of the reply proposed to be given to the Sheikh, provided that Koweit district is clearly defined as the district adjoining or close to the Bay of Koweit (telegram, dated 14th October 1902).

No. 274.

272. The message was conveyed to the Sheikh by Captain Hunt on behalf of the Resident, the Sheikh appears to have felt very much disappointed but promised to abide by the advice of Government.

"Captain Hunt informed the Sheikh, in accordance with Colonel Kemball's directions, that, so far as Sheikh Yusuf was concerned, both the Resident at Bushire and His Majesty's Consul at Busrah had reported his hostile attitude towards the Sheikh of Koweit to the British Government, and that it was hoped that means would be found to prevent him from doing further mischief; that, as regards the Sheikh's properties near Fao, it was not easy for His Majesty's Government to interfere, but that the Sheikh might be sure that what was possible on his behalf would be done, while, as regards Koweit itself, the Sheikh had every reason to be satisfied with the protection which had been afforded to him by the British Government, and that the intention of the Government to continue this protection was evident from the message which was conveyed to him. The Sheikh acknowledged that the British Government had done much for him, but it was evident that he was not entirely satisfied and considered that more might have been done for him."

XXXII.—Threatened attack on Koweit from Mubarak's nephews and Sheikh Yusuf-el-Ibrahim. The "Lapwing" case.

September 1902—January 1903.

273. In June 1902, Mr. Wratishlaw received overtures from Yusuf-el-Ibrahim of Dara, who had espoused the cause of his nephews against Sheikh Mubarak for a peaceable settlement of their disputes. Mr. Wratishlaw thought that Yusuf's claims were large, and doubted whether Mubarak would be able to pay them up—even if he were willing to do so. Finding he could expect to get no satisfaction from Mubarak, Yusuf made preparations to attack the Sheikh's territory and lands. He raided Subich and carried off several of the Sheikh's camels and property.

274. On the 3rd September Colonel Kemball received a telegram from the clerk in charge at Fao that the two sons of Mahomed, the late Sheikh of Koweit, with 200 armed men had left Dora the previous night with the object of attacking Koweit. The Resident despatched the *Lawrence* to forewarn the Sheikh. Meanwhile it appears that the Commander of the *Lapwing*, Captain Armstrong, having been apprised of the intended attack on Koweit, had proceeded to Koweit Bay, where he learnt, in confirmation of his information, that two suspicious dhows had been seen. He thereupon anchored at the entrance of Khor Abdullah, visiting all dhows passing. On the morning of the 5th September two suspicious dhows full of armed men were seen. They refused to stop when hailed, and threatened to fire on the "*Lapwing's*" boat, whereupon all boats gave chase, and finally dhows ran ashore on the Persian Coast. The Arabs landed and fired on the boats. One blue jacket was killed and two wounded, but the boats eventually succeeded in getting the two dhows off. Enemy's loss estimated at six from return fire of boats.

275. The two dhows belonged, there was little doubt, in the opinion of Captain Armstrong and Mr. Wratishlaw, to Dora, and were intended for a raid on Koweit or its neighbourhood, had the Sheikh been found unprepared.

276. Colonel Kemball thought that the Turkish authorities could easily, if they cared to do so, restrain Sheikh Yusuf and that it was probable that he was receiving secret encouragement at their hands. Twelve of the men, who had been in the dhows, were captured in Mohammerah, and it was clear that one of



them had been in the employ of Yusuf-el-Ibrahim. Several witnesses were found who had seen the expedition start from Dara, and Yusuf having been present on shore and superintended the arrangements, until the expedition started. It was clear also that the captured dhows were the property of Yusuf.

277. The Vali of Basrah deputed Police authorities to make an investigation into the case, but it was clear that the enquiry was a sham one and that the Vali's officers did their utmost to stifle the enquiry. Six of the witnesses, who were inhabitants of Koweit, were taken to Basrah to make their depositions. It was demanded that their depositions should be taken in the presence of the Commander of the *Lapwing*, as Sheikh Mubarak wished that they should not be let out of his presence, lest they should be enticed away and ill-treated and murdered, but this demand was refused by the Vali, as against the procedure of the Ottoman Courts. (See translation of his letter dated 3rd November 1902). He also described the witnesses as 'Ottoman' subjects, which implied that Koweit was Ottoman territory. Their depositions taken on oath by the British Consul were then sent to the Vali, as also the sworn depositions of 7 witnesses taken at Koweit by Commander Cartwright. Yet the criminal proceedings of the Basrah Police or Courts made no progress nor was any step taken against the culprits. A request was also made by the British Consul that the deposition of the witnesses might be taken by a Magistrate on board the gunboat in which they were conveyed. This request too was not complied with.

278. When these facts were reported to the Foreign Department, it was urged by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Dane, that a strong naval demonstration and an occupation of Fao would be the wisest course, but it was finally decided that a strong protest to the Porte with demand for the removal of the Vali and the punishment of the culprits would be the more advisable course in the first instance. The following telegram was accordingly sent to the Secretary of State on 13th December 1902:—

"It is clear from reports of Wratislaw and Commander, *Lapwing*, that Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim directly organised recent piratical attempt upon Koweit, and that Wali has deliberately brought about collapse of enquiry, in course of which moreover he twice claimed inhabitants of Koweit as Ottoman subjects. It does not seem possible to drop a case in which Turks have so behaved and in which British blue jackets have lost their lives. We urge strong measures to prevent a repetition of incidents which must gravely prejudice our position at Koweit and our prestige in Gulf. We trust that His Majesty's Government will press for suppression of Wali and for punishment of Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim and guilty parties. Attitude of Turkey here as well as at Aden suggests that limits of concession have been reached, and it may be desirable to make display of force if reparation be not given."

279. A strong remonstrance was therefore made by Sir N. O'Connor under the orders of the Foreign Office to the Porte and it was urged that the Ottoman Government should themselves take the initiative of punishing Yusuf-el-Ibrahim and the Sheikh's nephews by removing them from Basrah and by otherwise letting them understand that Turkish soil could not be made use of for organizing hostile expeditions against the Sheikh of Koweit. (Sir N. O'Connor's despatch, dated 2nd December 1902)

280. On 6th January 1903 Sir N. O'Connor reported that the Grand Vizier had after a meeting of the Council instructed the Minister of the Interior to order the Vali of Basrah to expel Yusuf Ibrahim and the two delinquent nephews of Sheikh Mubarak. On the 7th January, the Vali of Basrah informed the British Consul that he had proposed that Khalid and Hamud should be ordered to reside in their property at Guerdilan (a couple of miles above Basrah) and a pension should be allowed to them. Sheikh Yusuf had already left Basrah on the 8th December 1902. He had with Mubarak Azebi and Khaled-bin-Aun, who is Sheikh of Zubir, collected 200 men and attacked Sheikh Mubarak's tribesmen residing in the vicinity of Jehara. The tribesmen repelled them and in doing so wounded



Mubarak Azebi in the stomach who fell in his blood. His men took him away and they were defeated. Sheikh Mubarak's men pursued them to near Zubeir and captured the sheep and camels which belonged to Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim and Mubarak Azebi. At present the Sheikh has collected all his men round him and has ordered them not to leave his boundaries without his permission. His subjects and tribesmen are grateful to him.

281. About the end of December 1902, he was probably with Ibn Rashid in raiding a large number of camels and other animals from an outlying tribe, which owed some allegiance to the Sheikh of Koweit. The Sheikh could not take the offensive on account of the loss of these camels. It was also reported that Yusuf had gone to Mecca. He might, however, soon return to Basrah as also Khalid and Hamoun, as was probable, and then danger to Koweit would be renewed.

282. Later on, it appears, Khalid and Hamud joined the Amir, and the arrangement was that they should reside permanently at Hazil. If they returned to Basrah, the Vali assured the British Consul they would be arrested and tried for their attempt to attack Koweit. They had empowered their two brothers, Sabah and Sawu, to negotiate a settlement with their uncle.

283. His Majesty's Government ultimately decided not to press for compensation for the injuries inflicted on the crew of the *Lapwing* if Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim and the two delinquent nephews of Sheikh Mubarak received punishment demanded by His Majesty's Government. It was also decided that the question of demanding the recall of the Vali of Basrah (Nouri Pasha) should be deferred.

284. As regards the dhows captured, it was decided that they should be destroyed in the Persian Gulf outside the three mile limit.

XXXIII.—Ibn Rashid near Koweit and Sheikh Mubarak's movements.

December 1902—February 1903.

No. 206.

285. In the month of December 1902, the Amir of Nejd was reported to be within 12 hours' distance from Koweit, to have entered Koweit territory, but to have been driven out by Mubarak, who had gone out to meet him. The Government of India on hearing about this movement advised the Political Resident to make the necessary arrangements for the naval support of the Sheikh. Colonel Kemball ordered the gun-boat *Assaye* at Basrah to visit Koweit and bring news, but did not think it necessary to order more ships, as he believed that the Amir's movements were for the purposes of soliciting assistance from the Turks.

No. 302.

286. Sheikh Mubarak, however, made preparations to meet him, and perhaps even to take the offensive against him. From his own letter to the Resident, dated 5th January 1903, it appeared that he moved to Jehara, where there had been a raid committed a few days previously by Ibn Rashid's men. He professed to act merely on the defensive and to abide by the advice of the British Government, though he suffered so much loss by the raids of Ibn Rashid and his friend Yusuf-el-Ibrahim, and by his keeping quiet in obedience to our advice.

No. 302.

287. The Political Resident in his letter, dated 12th January 1903, proposed to visit the Sheikh and again in form him that it was not possible for His Majesty's Government to protect him from raids in the interior of his country, neither can they interfere actively in his behalf as regards his properties situated within Turkish territories, but that they have done and will continue to do all that is possible on his behalf.



288. To anticipate events, it may be stated here that the proceedings of the Turkish Courts of Justice in the matter are continuing to be a farce and sham, as will be seen from the following note addressed by Sir N. O'Connor to the Porte :—

"On the 12th Kanun-Sani, 1319 (26th January 1903), a Takrir was addressed from this Embassy to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs stating that an encounter took place in September 1318 (1902) between a boat of His Majesty's ship *Lapwing* and pirates in Bussorah waters, the said His Majesty's ship *Lapwing* having been despatched for the pursuit of pirates in these waters, in which encounter a British seaman was killed. In this takrir, the attention of the Grand Vizier was called to this important matter, and it was requested that prompt measures should be taken for the prosecution and proper punishment of the offenders.

The matter was referred from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Justice, by whom the necessary orders were telegraphed to the judicial authorities at Baghdad. These authorities not giving due attention to the contents of the communications which have passed at various dates between the Grand Vizier and the Ministry of Justice, nor to the evident importance of the affair, almost the whole of the last year and half has been spent in useless correspondence.

Now, immediately after the affair, the local Judge d'Instruction with the sanction and consent of the Vali of Bussorah, went on board the above mentioned His Majesty's ship *Lapwing* and took down the dispositions of the officers and seamen who had been in the boat on the occasion.

His Majesty's Embassy has heard with regret and astonishment that the "Chambre des Mises en Execution" at Baghdad has given a Decree stopping proceedings against the prime movers of the affairs, Yusuf bin Ibrahim and two nephews of the Sheikh of Koweit, on the ground that these deposition cannot be accepted as evidence on which to order a prosecution. This Decree is to be sent in a Report of the Baghdad Public Prosecutor to the Cour de Cassation at Constantinople for revision, but, seeing that the "Chambre des Mises en Execution" has considered as invalid the evidence given, with the consent and sanction of the Vali of Bussorah in the presence of the Juge d'Instruction on board His Majesty's ship, of which one of the crew has been murdered, His Majesty's Embassy cannot regard as satisfactory this Decree of the "Chambre des Mises en Execution," or any decision to be afterwards given by the Cour de Cassation, and requests that the matter may be submitted to the Grand Vizier, so that the necessary orders may be given for the proper punishment to be inflicted administratively or otherwise, on the aforesaid known persons and on the other guilty parties."

289. On 27th January the Secretary of State telegraphed :—

No. 303.

"Vali has reported to Turkish Government that Mubarak has collected large force at El D'Jahre intending to move on Zobeir. Mubarak should be warned in the sense of my telegram of 22nd September 1902."

290. In repeating this message to the Political Resident, His Excellency directed him to convey the necessary warning to the Sheikh, if it appeared that he meditated attack on Zobeir, and had gone to Jehara as already reported otherwise than to protect his own property.

No. 304.

291. Colonel Kemball who had been already apprised of the Sheikh's movements by Mr. Wratislaw, had gone to Koweit on 18th January and conveyed the necessary warning to him. But the Sheikh denied having any intention of taking the offensive. The Amir of Nejd was then at Hafer, 3 days' journey from Koweit and claimed by Mubarak as his territory. Colonel Kemball thought it improbable that the Sheikh had intended moving on Zobeir and proposed that no further action should be taken.

No. 305.

292. This information was telegraphed to the Secretary of State on 3rd February 1903 with the addition that His Excellency concurred with the Resident.

No. 306.

293. At the interview Colonel Kemball had with Sheikh Mubarak on the 18th January, there was an important discussion of the situation of affairs between

No. 40 of Secret E, April 1903, Nos. 23-70.

them. The following report of the interview is therefore printed in full :—

"At my interview with Sheikh Mubarak, I took the opportunity of discussing fully the situation with him. I said from his letters to me it appeared that he considered that he had a grievance against His Majesty's Government. It seemed to me, however, that he had no real cause for this, His Majesty's Government had supported him firmly throughout, and it was solely owing to this support that he had retained his independent position at Koweit.



With regard to his complaints against the Amir of Nejd and the Turks for having encouraged raids on his tribes, he must surely understand that it was not possible for His Majesty's Government to give him active support, but I felt sure that my Government had not neglected to take such measures as were possible in the way of representations to the Turkish Government on his behalf. Sheikh Mubarak acknowledged that he had real cause for gratitude to His Majesty's Government for the support which had been given to him, but he said that the Amir of Nejd was now at a place called Hafer, which was some three days' journey from Koweit and within Koweit territory, and that his enemy, Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim, was with the Amir. He said that, owing to his promise to the British Government, he was debarred from attacking the Amir, who was doing all he could to injure him by raids and by detaching his tribes from their allegiance to Koweit. I told the Sheikh that the advice which had been given to him not to assume an aggressive attitude against the Amir of Nejd appeared to me to be sound; that, as Mubarak had himself informed me, the fortune of war appeared to be going against the Amir whose power appeared to be on the decrease, and that, if Mubarak now kept quiet, time would appear to be on his side, whereas, if he now pursued an aggressive policy, he might get into difficulties from which it would be difficult for His Majesty's Government to extricate him. I told him at the same time that there could be no objection to his taking the requisite measures for protecting his own territories, but I advised him not to go further than this. The Sheikh appeared to acknowledge the justice of my remarks, and again said that he had no intention of assuming the offensive against the Amir. He then said that his chief causes for dissatisfaction were that his enemy, Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim, had been allowed to work against him with impunity and had not been brought to account, and that the Wali of Basrah treated him with the grossest injustice in the matter of his date gardens near Fao. With regard to the latter matter, he said that all he wanted was common justice as might be enjoyed by other owners of property in Turkey, whereas all the Wali's actions with regard to his properties were actuated by spite, and on this account he had suffered a loss of some 3,000 Turkish liras. He asked me if I could not arrange that the British Consul at Basrah should befriend him in the event of his having to make any representations to the Wali with regard to his properties. I tried to explain to the Sheikh the difficulty in the way of our interference with regard to property situated within Turkish territory, but I said that I would inform our Consul at Basrah of what he said. My interview with the Sheikh was long and very friendly. He more than once repeated his protestations of loyalty to the British Government, and his intention to abide by the advice which has been given to him. He spoke to me about the visit of the Russian cruiser "*Askold*" to Koweit, and told me that at the interview which he had with the Russian Consul from Basrah, who was on board, only civilities were exchanged. Whether this was the case I cannot say, but I have no reason to think that the Sheikh has any desire or intention of not continuing to adhere loyalty to his agreement with His Majesty's Government."

XXXIV.—Fao Estates dispute.

February 1903-1904.

294. The expulsion of Yusuf-el-Ibrahim left Mubarak's nephews helpless and at the mercy of their uncle. According to Mr. Wratislaw's telegram to Sir O'Connor, dated 11th February 1903, it appeared that, being in financial straits since Yusuf's departure, they proposed to arrange with the Sheikh concerning their estate, on the conditions that they were allowed to occupy the estates at Gherdilan and Ajerawah, and given an allowance of £-T. 2,000 a year less the income from those estates. The Secretary of State was of opinion that provided that this arrangement was accepted by the Sheikh and the settlement arranged through His Majesty's Consul at Basrah it might be approved. The Political Resident was asked to ascertain Mubarak's wishes.

No. 52.

295. The Political Resident telegraphed on 2nd March:—

"I have received reply from Mubarak, purporting that he heard from Wali on the subject months ago, and replied that he had accepted Sultan's trade for the appointment of disinterested persons at Basrah for the purpose of enquiring into, and deciding upon, claims of his nephew, and that he would accept whatever they may be agreeable to. Sheikh appears anxious to settle matter, but I do not think he is prepared to accede to the proposal of nephew entirely, and wishes matter should be referred to arbitrator(s) "under the eye of the British Consul and the Wali." I think that it will be a good thing if a settlement can be arranged, but I doubt whether interference of British Consul will be accepted. Perhaps Ambassador can arrange this. In any case, initiative must, it seems, be taken by Turkey. I will send copy of this by to-day's mail to Wratislaw."

No. 53.

296 His Excellency then despatched the following telegram, No. 458-E., dated the 5th March 1903, to His Majesty's Secretary of State:—

Mubarak replies that he informed Wali months ago that he accepted Sultan's Trade appointing disinterested persons at Basrah to enquire and decide on nephew's claims. Kemball



thinks Mubarak anxious to settle matter, but not prepared to accede to nephew's proposals entirely, and wishes matter referred to arbitration under supervision of Wratislaw and Wali.

In view of peculiar status of Koweit, perhaps O'Connor can arrange that proceedings should be attended by Consul.

297. The following telegram dated the 9th March 1903, was then received from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, in continuation of his telegram of 2nd March :— No. 56.

"Wratislaw concurs, but thinks with the present Wali he would not have difficulty regarding obtaining unofficial voice in the settlement. Wratislaw is awaiting the orders of Ambassador before mentioning matter to the Wali, who, it appears, first broached subject to him."

298. His Excellency then wired telegram No. 497-E., dated the 11th March 1903, to His Majesty's Secretary of State :— No. 57.

"My telegram 5th March, Koweit. Wratislaw has informed Kemball that he thinks he might easily obtain from present Wali unofficial recognition of his intervention in settlement, and that he awaits orders of Ambassador before mentioning matter to Wali, who, it appears, broached subject to him first."

299. Mr. Wratislaw then broached the matter to the Wali of Basrah. The Wali stated that in the absence of Hamud and Khalid, his two brothers Sabah and Sawer, would act in their behalf and on behalf of themselves and proposed that each side should appoint an arbitrator, and he should himself act as umpire. After some correspondence an arbitration Court was proposed consisting of 4 arbitrators on each side. One of the Sheikh's representatives was Hajj Mansur, who was well versed with the points at issue.

300. One of the representatives of the nephews of the Sheikh was Abdul Wahab-el-Kartus, a strong partizan of their cause. The umpire proposed by the Wali was Said Ahmed Pasha.

301. The negotiations about the settlement after this are reported in the letter of Mr. Crowe, Consul at Basrah, to the address of Sir O'Connor, dated 23rd June 1903 :— No. 180 of Secret E., January 1904, Nos. 140-205.

"My first interviews with the Wali gave me the impression that His Excellency was somewhat unwilling to admit my active interference in the arbitration regarding it as a matter exclusively within the competence of the Ottoman authorities, and the position of the Consulate as that of the friendly on-looker, whose interests in the welfare of one of the parties made it desirable to keep informed of what passed."

In order to disabuse the Wali's mind of this notion, I sent for the Vilayet Dragoman, and desired him to point out to His Excellency that my *locus standi* in the matter was based on my official instructions; that, according to them, the arbitration would be conducted under the supervision of the Consulate: that I was not only to be kept informed of all steps taken but also to be consulted at all stages of the proceedings: and that, if His Excellency attended the sittings of the Court, I was instructed to be present as well. I asked him to tell the Wali that I desire to see the arbitrators and umpire, as soon as possible, in order to discuss matters with them directly.

I received a message in reply that His Excellency quite understood the position of the Consulate and would keep me fully informed, but that he was precluded from writing officially on the matter, and hoped that, if he met my wishes privately, it would be sufficient. He added that there was no question of his attending the meetings at which only the arbitrators and umpire would be present.

Mubarak's representatives then called on me, and I explained to them and to Saiyid Ahmed Pasha, the umpire, whom I visited later, that the Consulate took an active interest in the conduct of the negotiations, and requested them to keep me informed of everything that passed. They were all of them very sanguine of success, but I was favourably impressed with Hajj Mansur Chelebi and the umpire, Ahmed Pasha, who took a sensible view of the question and discussed freely.

When I exchanged these visits, the reference paper, which had been sent to the Sheikh for rectification, had not been returned and things were at a standstill. On 24th April, I called again on the Wali, as I had heard that Mubarak had refused to accept the Court as it stood, and His Excellency informed me that the Sheikh objected to Saiyid Ahmad as umpire, and to two of nephews' nominees, one of whom was Abdul Wahab-el-Kartas, on the ground that they were interested persons, hostile to himself and openly allied with his enemy, Yusuf el-Ibrahim. The Wali assured me that Mubarak was needlessly apprehensive, and remarked that the nephews were free to choose their own friends to represent them in the same



way as the Sheikh had chosen his; and that, if they showed any personal feeling in the matter, such bias would be counterbalanced by the votes of the opposite side. It was not reasonable, he said, that the Sheikh should seek to have the whole Court on his side. He added that it was the second time that Mubarak had raised objections to the nominees, and that, as regards the umpire, he had consented to leave the choice to the arbitrators themselves who had unanimously selected the Nakib's brother as being a man of great intelligence and, living much apart, the Wali considered him to be entirely without bias. He finally begged me to communicate with the Sheikh, and to do what was possible to prevent the arrangements from failing through.

I told the Wali that the Sheikh might have good cause to distrust the umpire. I did not attach much importance to the personal feelings of the nephews' arbitrators, as their voices would be met by those of Mubarak's representative, and I judged the latter capable of defending his interest. But it was essential, I thought, to have a trustworthy and impartial person as umpire. Personally, I told him, I approved of Saiyid Ahmed, but I was new to the place and could not trust my own judgment entirely in the matter. I promised His Excellency to communicate with Mubarak and to try and bring him to terms.

I accordingly telegraphed to Your Excellency and to India on 25th April, and wrote privately to the Resident at Bushire, requesting him to urge the Sheikh to withdraw his objections and not to jeopardise the arbitration. I told him I thought Mubarak's interest were in good hands, and that he might rest assured I would watch them and exert myself on his behalf.

I then had another interview with the umpire Saiyid Ahmed, and found that he had no knowledge of the Sheikh's objections to himself, and, as I hoped that the arrangements would ultimately remain undisturbed, I did not think it necessary to enlighten him.

On 5th May the Resident at Bushire sent me copies of his letter to Mubarak, and of the answer he had received. He also sent me translations of the correspondence which had passed between the Sheikh and the Wali. The Resident asked my opinion as to what he should say in reply. The Sheikh, in these letters stated his reasons for objecting to his nephews' arbitrators, and claimed that, according to the text of the Imperial Irade, they should be persons without connection with, or interest in, either side.

He said he had personal reasons for distrusting the umpire, and did not wish to trouble him. Kartas he denounced as hostile to himself and an open friend of his arch-enemy, Yusuf-el-Ibrahim. He suggested Mr. Lyle, Messrs. Grey, Mackenzie's Basrah Agent, or Khalil Effendi, the Vilayet Organiser, as umpire. Colonel Kemball informed me privately that he thought we should be accepting responsibility if we advised the Sheikh to accept arbitrators or an umpire of whom he disapproved, and suggested that the Sheikh's objections to Saiyid Ahmed might be well grounded, as Mubarak knew him better than we did.

On 10th May the Wali told me he wished to meet the Sheikh's wishes as far as possible, in order not to delay the settlement, and stated that he had written to Mubarak after consulting his representatives, and had proposed the Murti as umpire, and two Sheikhs of Zobeir in place of the persons eliminated.

On 11th May the Resident at Bushire was informed of the change, and was asked to urge the Sheikh not to raise fresh obstacles, unless he had grave cause for contesting the eligibility of the persons now chosen. I observed that, as the Wali had displayed goodwill, the Sheikh, on his side, should show compliance, and that his representatives were entitled to his confidence.

This correspondence was forwarded to Your Excellency in my despatch No. 21 (Confidential) of 11th May. I did not enclose translations of the Sheikh's correspondence with the Wali, as I presumed these would reach Your Excellency through the Government of India.

On 18th May Abdul Wahab-el-Kartas, with whom I had discussed the arbitration, called on me, and stated he was submitting a joint proposal with Haji Mansur to the Sheikh, by which the nephews agreed to accept less than their rights. This, he said, would obviate the necessity of arbitration if accepted by Mubarak.

I replied that the Wali had already mentioned the subject to me, and that I saw no objection, provided it was a *bond fide* scheme. He explained the claims of the nephews, and I said I was glad to hear the views of the opposite side, but that, without consulting Mubarak's representatives, I could not possibly say whether they would prove acceptable to the Sheikh or not.

I then asked the Wali whether he knew the terms of the proposed scheme, and he admitted that he did not, but said that they were approved by Haji Mansur. I communicated with the latter, and asked for a statement of Mubarak's claim. But he said he could tell me nothing till he had heard from Mubarak himself, and, although I sent him a copy of Kartas' expose of the nephew's claims, he declined to criticise it for the present.

On the 24th May the Resident at Bushire telegraphed to me that Mubarak accepted the Court of arbitration and had signed and returned the reference to the Wali. The Sheikh stated that Yusuf-el-Ibrahim had returned to Dora.



The Wali, whom I visited on 25th May, said the papers had been signed and the representatives of the nephews and the umpire accepted by the Sheikh, but they were waiting to hear the result of the *ex parte* proposals. I urged that it was better to strike while the iron was hot, and said I thought the arbitrators should lose no time beginning the work. His Excellency, however, seemed to attach weight to the proffered settlement, and I raised no further objection. He denied all knowledge of Yusuf-el-Ibrahim's return. I called on Kartas, where I met Sand, one of the nephews, and urged the former to use his influence to bring matters to a speedy conclusion. He assured me that Yusuf-el-Ibrahim was in the Kasim district near Boreyda. A report had reached me that the Sheikh had attacked Shammar Arabs belonging to the Amir to the south-west of Zobeir and captured 800 camels. I communicated with the Wali who confirmed it. His Excellency was greatly incensed at Mubarak's duplicity; and said such action on his part was in strange opposition to his fair promises to live quietly and submit his differences to arbitration."

I was engaged for several days in making enquires regarding the alleged reappearance of Yusuf-el-Ibrahim. The Wali, at my request, summoned the Mudir of Zobeir at Basrah, and I made independent enquiries at Fao, Dora, and Zobier, where I sent a special messenger. I could not find trace of him anywhere.

From the Resident's letter to me of 1st June, it appeared that the *ex parte* proposal was less favourable to Mubarak than Kartas had represented.

On 7th June I was informed that the Sheikh had declined the proffered settlement and demanded the immediate release of his Agent, Abdul Aziz-bin-Salim. He instructed his lawyer and arbitrators not to begin the work till this had been effected.

I accordingly wrote to the Resident and explained that Mubarak was under no obligation to accept the scheme, but that his refusal of it need not interfere with the course of the arbitration proceedings. I asked that the Sheikh should be urged not to go back on his word, and begged him at the same time to assure Mubarak that I had made independent enquiries regarding Yusuf-el-Ibrahim, and that he had not returned."

302. After some of further correspondence, a joint agreement was formulated and on 12th September 1893, Consul Crowe telegraphed:—

"Am glad to report that the question at issue between the Sheikh and his nephews has been settled by an amicable compromise arranged under the supervision of the consulate and both parties have signed an agreement and are satisfied."

303. The translation of the agreement is given below:—

Translation of Transfer Agreement.

"This day Sheikh Mubarak Sabah, transfer to the sons of his deceased brother, Mahomed Pasha Sabah, name'y, to Sabah, in his own right, and as legal trustee for his brother and his cousins children of his uncle, the late Jerrah, minors, and as legal representative of the heirs of Mahomed and Jerrah aforesaid and of the heirs of the late Ali Jaber of the Sabah family, and to Sand, in his own right, all these portions of the estate of the late Mahomed Pasha and Jerrah Sabah, which they bequeathed in their own right and such as were inherited by them from the late Jaber Sabah, both real and personal property and all and everything described as inheritance as follows:—

The children aforesaid and the persons whom they represent, and for whom they are trustees, shall receive one whole and undivided forth part of the date plantations situated in the ward of Fao, depending on Basrah, together with one of two lots (hoz) situated at Fao aforesaid and also one-fourth part of the entire date garden of Sofieh. And the children aforesaid shall receive two-thirds entire of the date gardens situated at Gherdilan and at Zeyn and at Ajerawiyeh, less one-sixth which appertains to their grand-mother, the mother of the transfer aforesaid, together with two thousand liras, which their uncle, Mubarak Pasha, will pay them in cash. But the landed estate at Koweit shared in common by the heirs of Jaber Sabah and that possessed in common and in thirds by Mahomed, Jerrah and Mubarak shall remain as at present, in common, without detriment to the rights of the heirs of Mahomed and Jerrah and is not included in the present transfer. And as regards the money and debts due and arms and horses and cattle and ship the children have no share or part in them whatsoever and their uncle is fully and completely released from all liability and claim and demand as regards them. Then after conclusion of this agreement and legal transfer in the manner stated, it is agreed by the two parties to the transfer that Mubarak aforesaid shall give his nephews, in exchange for the fourth part of the Fao date gardens allotted to them, as stated above, three-fourths of the date plantations of Sofieh, and the third portion appertaining to him, together with the sixth portion belonging to his mother and her children, Mahomed and Jerrah, of the date gardens at Gherdilan and Ajerawiyeh and Zeyn, after valuation by experts. And if the value of these properties is less than the fourth part of Fao, Mubarak will pay the difference cash and Fao shall hereafter belong to him entirely. But if the shares in the said properties shall exceed in value the forth



of Fao, the children shall pay for the surplus in cash and shall enjoy full possession of the properties aforesaid. After signing these presents the parties shall appear in person or by attorney in the Court of the Sher at Busrah and execute and ratify the transfer.

Add.—The valuation of the above stated landed properties at Koweit shall be at the will of our uncle Mubarak Pasha, and in accordance with his estimate each person interested shall receive his due. This additional clause has been written with the consent of the parties in explanation of the above.

Value of the properties at Koweit.

Our grand-father's house (the late Jaber Sabah) including the reception rooms	...	Dollars 1,000
Our father, Sabah's house in which we all live and to which we have added, including reception rooms	4,000 ⁴
Small house opposite to it	200
Eighteen shops	1,800
Total	...	7,400

"These are all the tenements we hold from the heirs of Jaber and Sabah. You are aware what is the amount due from these sums to our son Sabah and his brothers and Saud and the sons of Jerrah and the heirs of our uncle the late Ali Jaber."



XXXV.—(1) Importance of Khor Abdullah as a future possible railway terminus and naval station. (2) Claim of the Sheikh to the island of Bubiyan and Subiyah, etc., 1904.

304. The above questions were left to settle themselves in March 1902, (see Section XXVI), but have recently been again taken up and have formed the subject of important correspondence. The following notes on the matter in the Foreign Department Proceedings Section E., January 1904, Nos. 140—205, may be read in the first instance :—

On the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Viceroy and Rear-Admiral G. Atkinson-Willes to Khor Abdullah on November 30, 1903, the Turkish flag was run up on the flag

The same Turkish flag was flying in the evening when the ships returned. Owing to the shoal water all round, it is impossible to approach the place within 4 miles, even for vessels drawing 12 feet. The town is built on the end of a long, low, sandy spit of land.

staff at the small Turkish post at Ras al Geit on the east coast of Bubiyan island. As H. M. S. *Sphinx* and R. L. M. S. *Laurence* passed at an early hour in the morning I had had His Excellency the Viceroy's and all mast head flags lowered at 6-30 A.M., sometime before reaching this place."

[Here follows a summary of the correspondence already noted.]

Lord Lansdowne* on 20th March had protested to Anthopoulos Pasha against the advance of Turkish parties in the vicinity of Koweit, as His Majesty's Government felt that they had reasons to complain of them as being departures from the *status quo*.

Lord Lansdowne's memorandum of 21st March 1902* states his views and specially mentions Bubiyan. The British claim to act in the Gulf was not based on a shadowy connection with Sheikh, but upon their general commercial and political position there as the predominant power in Southern Persia and in the Gulf. Fortunately in making his representation to the Porte, Sir N. O'Connor* modified his instructions considerably and, as reported in his despatch of 25th March, did not refer to Koweit as being within the Sultan's dominions, and in his despatch of 1st April he said that he had repeated his observation to the Porte that the occupation by the Turks of Um Kasr and Bubiyan could not be regarded as prejudicing the Sheikh's rights and authority over them. So far then as official representations go, we can re-open the question of the Turkish occupation of these places, if necessary, after inquiry.

It may, perhaps, be necessary to do this, as at the same time when these protests were made there was some idea of Britain participating in the Baghdad Railway, and we should not in that case have objected to a terminus for the railway on the Gulf at Kasr or even at Koweit. Now that we are not to participate in the railway the case is altered and the question of reopening the discussion about Khor Abdullah, Um Kasr and Bubiyan might perhaps be more fully considered.

30-11-03.

L. W. DANE.

The *Laurence* arrived at the anchorage below the junction of Khor Zobair with Khor Um Kasr at 11-30 A.M. Except at the eastern end of Warba Island, where she touched slightly by shaving the spit too closely, over 4½ fathoms were obtained throughout. On going out at dead low water a depth of only 11 feet was obtained over the bar here for about ¼ mile. The anchorage is about 2 or 3 miles from Um Kasr fort which was occupied, but no flag was visible on the flagstaff during the stay of the ship from 11-30 A.M. to 12-30 P.M. The right shore of the Khor below the fort was good, firm land and would afford a good landing place. Commander Kemp in his report of 20th February 1902 reported the Um Kasr had a good water supply, but Acting Consul Crow, who visited the place on 29th April 1903, found that the water was brackish. (No. 20 current); the edge of the right bank, some 50 feet above the water level, and beyond the fort up the Khor some scrub jungle and grass were visible. The fort, which is above ¼ mile from the Khor appeared to be in good repair. Captain Smyth of the Cheshire Regiment had visited the place a few days before His Excellency's arrival. The garrison at the time of his visit consisted of some 30 men. After discussion with the Admiral and Commander Kemp, who said that in their opinion all the anchorages in Um Kasr and round Warba Island were greatly preferable to Koweit and would afford an impregnable harbour, His Excellency decided that the best solution of the difficulty would perhaps be to assert Sheikh Mubarak's claim to Bubiyan which is considered good by the Consul at Basrah and could be more easily supported owing to its being an Island, and to place a post on his behalf at the north end to Bubiyan island, which would command the entrances to Khor Um Kasr as well as the better large harbour south of Warba Island.

30-11-03.

L. W. DANE.

The above is a correct account of what has passed and of my present impressions. We made a stand both in favour of Subiyah and Bubiyan Island in 1902. We should undoubtedly not have admitted a Turkish post on the southern extremity of the island, and if this be so, I think that we have a good case for resisting it on the East. My inclination, subject to further enquiry, would be to tell the Turks that they must withdraw their post at Ras-al-Geit

* Vide Appendix I.



and whether they do or not, to plant a Koweit post at the northern end of the island opposite the southerly anchorage, or if this is too stiff a pill for His Majesty's Government, then to say that we regard Bubiyan Island as belonging to the Sheikh, and that unless their force is withdrawn we shall support him in establishing another on the northern shore. The result would probably be that the Turks would retire, and that the island would remain unoccupied. We could then encourage the Sheikh to put some of his people upon it and resume occupation.

30-11-03.

C[URZON].

If Your Excellency thinks of advocating an assertion of Sheikh Mubarak's rights over Bubiyan and the adjacent island of Warba and the location of the post at the northern end of Bubiyan, perhaps the reports of the piracies off Bubiyan and in Khor Abdullah contained in the Administration Report of the Gulf for 1903-04 may furnish an additional argument for action. We have already refused to allow the Turks to descend the Khor Subiyah, and as he has plenty of boats, Mubarak ought to be quite strong enough to prevent landing of small parties on these islands.

30-11-03.

L. W. DANE.

30-11-03.

C[URZON].

305. On the above the following despatch was written to the Secretary of State No. 25, dated the 4th February 1904 :—

Secret E, March 1904, Nos. 200—201.

"In his Secret despatch* No. 196, dated the 17th December, His Excellency the Viceroy briefly mentioned his recent visit to Koweit and the Khor Abdullah, and the prospects of the shores of this waterway as a future possible railway terminus. We now have the honour to address you in greater detail on the subject.

* See précis of Explorations and Tours in Arabia, Persia and Persian Gulf.

"2. It will be within the recollection of His Majesty's Government that early in 1902 it was reported that the Turks had established a post at the head of the Khor Abdullah. The Commander of H.M.S. *Sphinx*, who was sent to enquire into the matter, visited the locality between the 14th and the 19th of February, and reported that, in addition to a position which they had occupied at Um Kasr, the Turks had, for the first time about a fortnight previously, stationed a force of some 20 men on the south-east corner of Bubiyan Island. This unwarranted encroachment was at once brought to the notice of your predecessor, reference was made to the importance of the positions seized, and it was proposed by the Viceroy that the Turks should be told that they must at once leave Bubiyan, even if no protest were offered against the occupation of Um Kasr. On the 26th March Lord George Hamilton telegraphed that it was considered inadvisable to raise irritating discussions about the movements of Turkish troops to places to which the Sheikh's title would be difficult to prove, and it was explained that His Majesty's Government did not wish to obstruct the prolongation of the Baghdad Railway to the Gulf, whether at Koweit or elsewhere. It was added, however, that their assistance would be conditional upon British capital receiving, in respect of construction, materials, and management, at least equal shares with any other Power. In the event, no action was taken to assert the Chief's claims beyond an intimation to the Porte that their action was regarded as constituting a disturbance of the *status quo*, and that the occupation of the places in question could not be regarded as in any way prejudicing the Sheikh's rights and authority over them, and the Turkish posts still remain at Um Kasr and Al Geit, where they were then established.

"3. The importance of the question lies in its relation to the future probable terminus of what is known as the Baghdad Railway. Article I of the Convention, dated the 21st January 1902, between the Turkish Government and the promoters of this enterprise provides that the projected railway shall run from Zobeir to a point on the Persian Gulf to be determined by mutual agreement between the Ottoman Porte and the Company, and there appears to be no doubt that the Turkish advance of 1902 to the shores of Khor Abdullah and the island of Bubiyan was designed to enable the concessionaires to secure, without reference to His Majesty's Government, what was already recognised by the German Engineers, and has since been generally acknowledged to be, the most suitable terminus on the Gulf. The first section of the line is now, we understand, in course of construction by German enterprise



unaided, and no arrangements have been made, as far as we are aware, in respect of any portion of the railway from Konia, to the Persian Gulf for securing the condition whereby His Majesty's Government contemplated that equality of treatment should be secured for British capital.

"4. During his recent tour in the Gulf the Viceroy personally visited the Khor Abdulla, in company with the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the East Indies Station, and the result of the inspection was to confirm the view which we previously entertained of the importance of the Khor and of the superiority of its shores, for the purpose of a railway terminus, over any of the sites in the immediate neighbourhood of Koweit which have previously claimed attention. On board the *Laurence* their Excellencies passed up the channel to the anchorage below the junction of Khor Zobeir with Khor Um Kasr, and except at the eastern end of Warba Island, where there is a bar with a depth of two fathoms for a short distance, a depth of four and-a-half fathoms was obtained throughout. The anchorage is some three miles from Um Kasr post, and the banks of the channel are sufficiently high to provide a firm and convenient landing place. To the south of the Warba Island lies the large sheet of water with plenty of depth and room for an anchorage, to which Rear-Admiral Willes refers in paragraph 50 of his letter No. 209-1171, dated 8th December 1903, to the Secretary to the Admiralty, of which we enclose a copy.

"Owing to the length of the channel and its capacity for easy land or submarine defences, a port in either of these localities would be absolutely safe from any attack, from the seaward.

"We have already intimated in our Secret despatch No. 16, dated the 21st January 1904, that the remarks of the Naval Commander-in-Chief in paragraph 51 of this letter were written under a misapprehension, and do not accurately represent the political position. It is not necessary here, therefore to take them into account.

"5. In our Secret despatch No. 27* (Frontier), dated the 4th February 1904, we have mentioned the probable antagonism of German interests to our own in

* See précis of Turkish Arabian affairs.

this quarter and the attitude which, in our opinion, should be adopted towards the designs of other nations in Turkish Arabia, and we consider that no time should be lost in endeavouring to retrieve so far as may still be possible the position which we have so seriously endangered by acquiescence in these encroachments. So far as concerns Um Kasr and the neighbouring mainland, the claims of the Sheikh of Koweit do not appear to have been strong. But whatever may have been their validity, it would be difficult, and we would not now propose to try, to induce the Turks to abandon the occupation which for the past year they have been permitted to maintain. The case of Bubiyan Island we regard as entirely different. Here we consider that the Sheikh has claims which can be sustained alike with better reason, with greater prospect of success, and owing to its insular position, with smaller risk of subsequent embarrassment

† No. 42, dated the 28th February 1902.
(Copy sent under cover of the Foreign Secretary's letter No. 12-M., dated the 20th March 1902.)

to ourselves. In February 1902 our Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported† that Sheikh Mubarak had addressed to him a written communication in which he advanced his claim to the island, and asserted that the Avazem tribe, who are his subjects, had lived there since the occupation of Koweit for seven months during the summer of each year, and had established fishing enclosures on the island. Colonel Kemball regarded the pretention as valid, and a like view appears to have been held by His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who a few days

‡ Sir Nicholas O'Connor to the Marquess of Lansdowne, No. 23, dated the 16th March 1902.

later telegraphed‡ to the Marquess of Lansdowne that the Consul at Basrah considered the Sheikh's claim to the island to be good. Sir Nicholas O'Connor, however, expressed§ the opinion that there was no object in raising a conflict about

§ Sir Nicholas O'Connor to the Marquess of Lansdowne, No. 30, dated the 11th March 1902.

Bubiyan Island while leaving the Turks in possession of Um Kasr. Had the Ambassador then been in possession of the information which is now available, we believe that he would not have entertained this view. With the shores of the mainland and of Bubiyan Island in the possession of a single Power, the anchorages below Um Kasr and at Warba Island can at any time be converted



into an impregnable harbour; and even if the day is still distant when the banks of the Khor Abdulla are likely to be armed with foreign forts of batteries, the undivided occupation by a German Railway Company of a potentially invulnerable position is not calculated to conduce to the enhancement either of British commercial prosperity or of British political prestige. Supposing, however, that we are able to make good Sheikh Mubarak's claims, we at once place ourselves in a position to establish, at the north end of Bubiyan Island, a post which would command not only the anchorage but also the approaches up the Khor Abdullah, and we acquire the power to assert, in such a manner as our paramount interests demand, our right to participate in all arrangements relative to the prospective terminus of the Anatolian Railway. An additional argument, if any is needed, in favour of strengthening our position at Bubiyan may perhaps be found in the fact that the Khor is used as a place of refuge by pirates whom the Turkish Government is unable to control and who, as shown in the Administration Report of the Persian Gulf for 1902-03, commit piracies off Bubiyan.

"6. His Majesty's Government have never admitted the Turkish claim to the island, and have, indeed, protested against the interference with the *status quo* involved in the placing of a post at Al Geit, where, prior to the month of February 1902, the Turks had never pretended to exercise an authority even of the most shadowy description, and where the total garrison now consists of some 6 men. On the same occasion we were informed by Lord George Hamilton* that the British Government would resist a Turkish advance on the Koweit side of Subiyah. This place is separated only by a channel from the southern end of Bubiyan Island: and the claims of the Sheikh to both positions seem to us to be of equal validity.

* Telegram of 8th April 1902.

"7. The proposal accordingly which we submit for your consideration is that the Porte should now be informed that we are unable to recognise their right to maintain a station on Bubiyan, and should be requested to withdraw their troops; while at the same time we should establish a post on behalf of Sheikh Mubarak on the northern end of the island opposite to the southern anchorage. The Sheikh has always urged his claims to this island, and during the Viceroy's visit to Koweit he repeatedly asked why the Turks were not compelled to evacuate both Bubiyan and Um Kasr which belonged to him. He has several boats, and could easily with small support from us prevent Turkish troops from crossing the Khor Subiyah or channel between Bubiyan and the mainland on the west. Should His Majesty's Government deem it advisable to spare the Sultan's susceptibilities by the adoption of a less pronounced course of action, we think it possible that our object might be secured by intimating that we regard Bubiyan Island as belonging to the Sheikh, and that, unless the Turkish force is withdrawn, we shall be constrained to support him in establishing a post on the northern shore to balance the Turkish posts at Um Kasr and Al Geit. In this case the Turks would probably retire, and the island would remain unoccupied. The Sheikh would then resume possession, and it would only remain for us to carry out hereafter such further measures as might be necessary for the maintenance of our legitimate interests."

XXXVI.—Recent movements of Ibn Rashid, January 1903—March 1904.

306. We left Ibn Rashid at Hafer about the end of the month of January 1903.* Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud was at the time in the interior—probably at Riadh. Since then we have had only scraps of news about their movements, without an intelligible connection between them. In fact the whole history of Nejd for the last two or three years requires to be re-written in the light of a careful local enquiry. In this précis a synopsis will be given below of the occasional reports we have received in chronological order, the dates given being generally the probable ones. We shall call Abdul Aziz-bin-Rashid simply Ibn Rashid and Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul-Kahman-bin-Faysal by the name of Ibn Saud.

* See Section XXXIII.



End of January 1903.—307. Ibn Rashid was at Hafer threatening Koweit. Sheikh Mubarak was at Jehara preparing to defend himself.

3rd March 1903.—308. Ibn Saud arrived in the suburbs of Koweit and encamped at Arifiah, five miles distant from Koweit.
Enclosure 1, Pro. No. 69, Secret E., April 1903, Nos. 23-70.

4th March 1903.—309. Ibn Saud accompanied by his brother Mahomed and 100 sowars, came to Koweit and visited Sheikh Mubarak. They proposed to stay at Koweit until Bakr-Id, and thereafter fight Ibn Rashid, who appears to have been at the time in the suburbs of Kasim, rather weakened by the desertion of many of the tribes to the side of Abdul Aziz. Abdul Rahman, father of Abdul Aziz, was settled at Riadh. Sheikh Jaber, son of Sheikh Mubarak, was at Jehara with troops, while Mubarak was at Koweit.

5th to 7th March 1903.—310. The Russian cruiser *Boyarin* and the French cruiser *Infernet* arrived at Koweit on 5th March with the Russian Consul, Bushire. The Consul paid visits to Sheikh Mubarak and Abdul Aziz on 6th. Commander Kemp (of the *Sphinx*) also arrived at Koweit on 6th and visited both. Abdul Aziz mentioned to him that the Russian Consul offered him assistance in the shape of money and rifles.
Nos. 69-70 of Secret E., April 1903. Nos. 23-70, and also Enclosure 2, Proceedings No. 144 of Secret E., January 1904, Nos. 140-205.

311. It was pointed out to Ibn Saud how undesirable it was that foreign European countries should interfere in the affairs of Nejd, and how inadvisable it would be for him to accept any offer from the Russians, especially when the British Government was the predominant power in the Persian Gulf and intended to remain so. Ibn Saud promised to report what Commander Kemp had said to his father, but pointed that Ibn Rashid received money and support from the Turks, and that it was necessary for him to have money to retain the support of the Arab tribes.

312. Sheikh Mubarak sounded Commander Kemp as to the possibility of the British aiding Ibn Saud with money. The Commander could not ascertain as to what passed between the Sheikh and the Russian Consul. He thought it probable that some attempt had been made at an understanding with the Sheikh, but the latter had not responded to the advances. On the 7th, the Consul paid a second visit to both the Sheikh and Ibn Saud and presented the former with two guns and a revolver, and the latter with one gun (Muser).

About middle of March 1903.—313. Ibn Rashid made an attempt to capture Riadh, but was repulsed with heavy loss.
No. 319 of Secret E., June 1903, Nos. 307-335.

May 1903.—314. Mubarak attacked the Beni Jwala and captured 800 camels from them at Khamissiye near Ghabishiye (10 hours from Zobeir). His malcontent relative Mubarak-el-Athabi of Zobeir, who accompanied the Beni Jwala escaped.

June and July 1903.—315. Certain Sheikhs of Aneyza, who were expelled by Ibn Rashid when he occupied the district, took refuge with Mubarak at Koweit. In the early part of July Mubarak sent an emissary, named Abd-el-Ali, to Aneyza to confer with the notables. He proposed to reinstate their former Sheikhs, and informed them that he would employ force if they resisted. The notables agreed, and Abd-el-Ali then proceeded to Shaggera to see Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud, who had collected a number of the tribesmen round Riadh and proposed to attack Boreyda. Ibn Rashid and Yusuf el Ibrahim were said to be at Boreyda, and were constructing a fort. The former Sheikhs of Aneyza were leaving Koweit en route for Ibn Saud's head-quarters, and would join him in the expedition.
No. 195, Secret E., January 1904, Nos. 140-205.

316. The Amir's force was much weakened by repeated repulses and unsuccessful forays, and it was not believed that he could offer serious resistance. A convoy of arms despatched to Yusuf-el-Ibrahim from Katar had been intercepted by Mahomed, brother of Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud at Sirr, some two days' distance from Boreyda. He captured 10 loads. In the middle of June the same Mahomed proceeded from Riadh to within a day's distance of Boreyda and plundered the Bedouins belonging to Ibn Rashid.



317. Yusuf-el Ibrahim sent some mounted men to Dora with instructions to Sheikh el-Ibrahim, his kinsman, to collect a force. The latter collected 150 men, but their destination was unknown.

318. A regular correspondence was kept up between the Nakib's family at Basrah and Yusuf-el-Ibrahim at Boreyda. The latter was also in communication with Mullah Hamza, the Sheikh of Mohammerah's agent here and Abdul Wahab-el-Kirtas.

October 1903.—319. Ibn Saud left Riyadh for Shakra, and the *ex*-Sheikhs of Kasim were ready to leave Koweit to join him. Ibn Rashid reported to be near Zalfi, of two days journey to the north-east of Shakra and 36 hours from Boreyda.

Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

Beginning of December 1903.—320. It was reported that Ibn Saud had captured Zalfi, and executed Ibn Rashid's representative and ten of his men posted there, and also that Ibn Rashid has sent 60 men to reinforce his garrison at Eneza, which was too weak to defend itself against Ibn Saud. In the opinion of Mubarak, Ibn Saud was now practically master of Nejd and would make short work of Kasim and Aneyza.

Middle of January 1904.—321. Sheikh Mubarak reported that Ibn Saud attacked Hussein Jerad, a relative of Ibn Rashid, and killed him and 400 of his followers. He took his flag and sent it to Koweit.

March 1904.—322. Aneyza was reported to have been captured by Ibn Saud. He also defeated Majid in a battle, and took back the members of the Saud family, who were with him, Saud-bin-Abdul Aziz, Saud-bin-Mahomed, Feysal bin-Saud.

April 1904.—323. A telegram was received, dated 25th April, from Political Resident in Turkish Arabia to say that Ibn Saud had captured Riyadh (? *sic*) and driven out Ibn Rashid, who retired then to Samawa on the Euphrates. He added:—"Four Turkish Infantry regiments, each 600 strong, are ordered for Samawa and 4,000 lira, 800 Martini-Henry rifles, and 1,000 Martini-Henry rifles and 1,000 Snider rifles and 60,000 rounds of ammunition have been sent to Ibn Rashid by the Turks. The money, rifles and ammunition left Baghdad three days ago. It is also contemplated to send Ibn Rashid three new guns lately received from Constantinople and three mountain guns. The artillery men are practising at these guns daily."

No. 323 of Secret
E., August 1904, Nos.
286-373.

324. In repeating this message to the Secretary of State on 28th April 1904, His Excellency Lord Curzon suggested that the Turks might again be warned against direct interference in affairs of Nejd, or it might be necessary for His Majesty's Government to take measures in those regions in order to protect British interests.

XXXVII.—Montefik Arabs seek Russian protection. Sadun Pasha revolts and seeks refuge at Jehara in Koweit. Sheikh of Koweit warned against aiding him.

325. On 8th September 1902 Mr. Wratislaw (Consul, Basrah) reported to Sir N.O'Connor that a number of leading Montefik Arabs had applied to him to procure British nationality or protection on the ground that the Russian Consul at Baghdad had been issuing passports to Native Shiah of that district. Mr. Wratislaw replied that it was impossible for him to comply with their request. They then applied to the acting Russian Consul for protection. An answer was promised on return of the Consul who had been absent on leave. On his return it was reported that their application was preferred to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. We have not heard further as to what was the result of this application.

Secret E., March 1903, Nos. 34-35.

Secret E., November 1903, No. 95.

326. We next hear of the Montefik Arabs in connection with disturbances in which Sadun Pasha plays an important part and Sheikh Mubarak was believed



to have secretly embroiled himself. The origin of these disturbances was explained by Mr. Wratisslaw in his despatch, dated November 21, 1903, to Sir O'Connor:—

"Sadun Pasha and his followers, whose wanderings are generally confined to the marshes west of the Euphrates, wished to cross into the Jezireh, that is, the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris, in order to pasture their flocks. Their passage was opposed by the tribes there resident, who feared his extortion, and complained to the Vali of his action. His Excellency wrote to remonstrate with Sadun, but the latter paid no attention and effected a crossing. He then began to oppress and blackmail the smaller tribes, renewing, among other things, claims for blood money, based on old feuds of over forty years' standing. The Jezireh tribes lost patience and appealed to the Turkish authorities, and a certain Colonel Agassi, a Kurd, was despatched from Samawa to smooth matters over. He seems to have been a hot-headed, tactless man, and appeared on the scene at Shatra with some fifty soldiers and gendarmes, and several officers. A heated conversation with Sadun Pasha developed into a brawl, and most of Colonel Agassi's party, including himself, were massacred, after which Sadun Pasha took flight. He is said to be still in the Jezireh with Mahomed Daghestani at his heels, but the latter is unable to circumvent him without cavalry, of which the Turks are very short.

The Vali tells me that Sadun Pasha is an extortionate, grasping individual, who wants to make a fortune by violent means. The Montelik are divided into two factions, those for and against him. His partisans consist of all the bad elements of the tribes, and his opponents are the well-ordered, peace-loving denizens of the Jezireh, who would gladly be rid of him if his demands were less exacting. The affair causes great unrest in that part of the province, and the Vali seemed perplexed as to the issue."

327. Mr. Crow reported on 16th November 1903 that Sadun Pasha had returned to his property at Sakharich, a place near the Euphrates between Nassiriye and Kamisieh and had telegraphed to Constantinople, throwing all blame on Colonel Agassi, who was killed in the action.

328. In December he was reported to be at Jehara near Koweit, and General Mahomed Pasha Daghestani to be at Zobeir, with 1,200 Turkish troops, watching his movements and on the look-out to capture him. The local authorities were inclined to believe that Sheikh Mubarak was at the bottom of the disturbances, but Sir N. O'Connor thought that this was unlikely, as the Sheikh and Sadun had not been on friendly terms at the time. Colonel Kemball (see his letter No. 8, January 1904), visited the Sheikh in January 1904 in company with Mr. Crow (Acting Consul at Basrah). They were informed by him that Sadun was 36 miles from Koweit and had applied to him for help, but that he refused, since, in the Sheikh's opinion, Sadun had acted foolishly in getting himself into trouble with the Turks. *The Sheikh was warned by Colonel Kemball not to involve himself in any way with the matter in hand between the Turks and Sadun.*

329. During an interview Mr. Crow had with the Vali of Basrah, on 25th January 1904 the latter urged that the fact that the Sheikh had allowed Sadun to take refuge at Jehara, within his territory, showed clearly that he had offered protection to Sadun, and that he ought to take him and hand him over to the Turkish Government, to prove that he was not his ally in the recent disturbances. Mr. Crow pointed out that this would be a serious breach of the laws of Arab hospitality.

330. Sadun had, however, at this time left Jehara, and had offered to lay down his arms on condition of Imperial pardon. Mr. Crow thought that this would probably be granted. If, however, the Turks tried to corner him, it was feared he would slip to Jehara, and his presence there would be a source of irritation to the Turks.

331. On February 3rd the Secretary of State telegraphed—

"Sir N. O'Connor reports that the Sheikh of Koweit is in all probability abetting Sadun Pasha and is likely to be involved with him in raids on tribes under the protection of Turkey. Early opportunity should be taken by Colonel Kemball of warning him once more that the good offices of His Majesty's Government can only be extended to him, if he refrains from aggression and is guided by their advice."

332. In reply, the Viceroy reported by telegraph, dated 11th February, the action taken by Colonel Kemball and Mr. Crow as reported in his letter of 8th January in warning the Sheikh.



- No. 292. 333. About this time the Shammar and Aniza tribes who had been long at feuds (see Secret E., April 1903, Nos. 212-213) became reconciled and were reported to be marching in the direction of Basrah against Sadun and his party.
- No. 305. 334. Mahomed Pasha who had been sent to catch Sadun fell soon into disgrace on account of his ill-success due either to his inability or perhaps to his unwillingness arising out of his relationship with Sadun.

XXXVIII.—Advance of a loan made to Sheikh Mubarak.

March—May 1904.

335. In March 1904 Sheikh Mubarak applied for a loan of Rs. 1,00,000 to enable him to pay the amount due by him to his nephews in accordance with the settlement recently arrived at. According to the estimate made by Mr. Crow. The amount so due amounted to £ T. 6,3 0, which nearly agreed with the Sheikh's estimate. The Government of India sanctioned the grant of the loan applied for, being made repayable without interest in two equal instalments, the first before the close of the present year and the balance before the end of 1905, on condition that the Sheikh should undertake not to borrow from other sources, till the loan has been repaid, without previous reference to the Government of India. The money is to be paid through the Resident in the Persian Gulf. (Government of India's letter No. 1709-E. A., dated 24th May 1904.) The condition as to future borrowing was considered by Lord Curzon as important.

XXXIX.—Proposed opening of a British post office at Koweit, 1901—1904.

326. The first proposal for opening a British post office at Koweit was made in November 1901, and that emanated from Sheikh Mubarak. Colonel Kemball was against the proposal (1) because it was doubtful whether the local receipts would be sufficient to cover the expenses of the post office and (2) the measure might not be advisable at that juncture in view of the British position at Koweit. The Government of India were not unwilling to extend the postal service to Koweit, and there was no difficulty about the cost of the establishment. The real difficulty was to find a proper *locus standi* for a post office at that port. The post offices hitherto maintained by the Indian Government in the Persian Gulf and Turkish Arabia are not separate post offices, but depend upon the Political and Consular authorities; and the post-masters, even if paid entirely by the Postal Department, are usually borne on the Political or Consular establishments. If a native agent were appointed, the Government of India thought it would be simple to give him an extra allowance for conducting the business of the post office, for which there would be a stronger case when Koweit would be made once a fortnight a regular port of call by the British India Steam Navigation Company's steamers on their downward journey. But it was considered that the native agent should come first and the post office afterwards. The question of appointing an agent was postponed for consideration until a regular steamer service was opened with Koweit.

337. The question was re-opened when, during Lord Curzon's visit to Koweit, the Sheikh again pressed the proposal made in 1902. The following telegrams were then exchanged between the Viceroy, the Secretary of State and Colonel Kemball :—

Telegram No. 164-E.A., dated the 16th January 1904.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy, Calcutta.

To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

Now that regular steam service has been established to Koweit, and in answer to the request for a post office made by the Sheikh in January 1902, and renewed while I was at Koweit, we propose to appoint a native medical subordinate to hold charge of the post office and also to do medical work, for which I ascertained that there was much need. Please let me know whether you approve of our proposal.



Telegram, dated the 19th February 1904.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Calcutta.

Please refer to your telegram of the 16th January regarding Koweit. I approve your proposal to appoint a native medical subordinate of the Indian Government to the charge of the post office there, but am of opinion that the Sheikh *should undertake not to allow the establishment of post office of other countries.*

Telegram, dated the 21st February 1904.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta,

To—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL C. A. KEMBALL, C.I.E., Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Your letter 5th June 1903. On the 16th January Viceroy telegraphed to Secretary of State: "Now that regular steam serviceapprove of our proposal?" In reply Secretary of State telegraphs 19th February: "I approve of other countries." Can you obtain required undertaking and arrange details when you or your assistant visits Koweit in connection with Gogayer's intrigues and importation of arms?

Telegram, dated the 29th February 1904.

From—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL C. A. KEMBALL, C.I.E., Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushire,

To—The Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.

Your telegram of the 21st instant. Post office, Koweit. Sheikh has given required undertaking, which I will forward with report next mail.

338. In accordance with the approval of the Secretary of State conveyed in his telegram of 19th February 1904, Government proceeded to make the necessary arrangements for sending a medical subordinate to Koweit. Assistant Surgeon Daudar Khan (M.B.) has been selected for the post, and will receive the pay of his grade *plus* a local allowance of Rs. 100 a month with other allowances. A postman has been ordered to go with him to perform the work of packer and stamping (Government of India's letter No. 1575-E. A., dated the 13th May 1904).

339. Meanwhile we received the following telegram, dated the 1st July 1904, from His Majesty's Secretary of State for India:—

"Koweit. Please refer to my telegram of the 9th February 1904. Though Sir N. O'Connor does not question the advantage of the new postal arrangement, he considers that its execution should be delayed until the Porte has replied to his representations regarding the island of Bubiyan. Have any steps been taken already towards the selection of an officer and the establishment of the post office? His arrival at Koweit should in any case be deferred in order to avoid any appearance of infringement of the status quo while negotiations are in progress regarding the island of Bubiyan."

340. With this telegram of the Secretary of State, matters came to stand still, while under the recent orders of the Secretary of State a Political Agent has been appointed at Koweit (see section XII). The situation is explained

* Pages 21-22 of Secret E., July 1904, Nos. 620-659.
1904:—*

"It is not easy to fathom what was in the mind of Sir N. O'Connor in moving His Majesty's Government to object to the immediate despatch of the postal subordinate to Koweit after he had but a few days before acquiesced in the appointment of a Political Agent with Sheikh Mubarak. The history of these two proposed appointments is briefly as follows:—

"In July 1903 Sir N. O'Connor advocated that a Resident should be sent to Koweit, and the proposal was supported by the Viceroy, but His Majesty's Government objected on the ground that it would be a departure from the *status quo*.

In February 1904 the Secretary of State sanctioned the appointment of a medical subordinate to be in charge of the post office at Koweit, which the Sheikh had asked for, considering that it was unobjectionable in itself, and tended towards the extension of British influence in the place."

Sir N. O'Connor had been previously consulted and said:—

"The Porte may remonstrate against the establishment of post office at Koweit as an infringement of the *status quo*, but as we have similar offices in Turkey proper, I do not think that this matters, and I see no objection."



Thus while the Political Agent was negatived, the post office was sanctioned, but a little later on the question of the former appointment came again in connection with the Nejd affairs. On 16th May 1904 Major Cox telegraphed that Bin Saud had applied for British protection for himself and his country in view of the Turkish invasion, and in repeating this to the Secretary of State on 20th May the Viceroy said that it might become necessary to revive the proposal to post a British Resident to Koweit in order to watch events there in the event of armed intervention being persisted in by the Turks.

In reply the Secretary of State telegraphed on 21st May that if the Turks persisted in assisting the Amir of Nejd, it might be expedient to reconsider the question of appointing a Resident at Koweit. Then followed the important telegram of 29th May 1904, in which the Government of India made a forecast of events in Nejd, prescribed the policy which should be followed, and offered immediately to select a Political Agent for Koweit if the Secretary of State approved. That approval was communicated on 24th June, and arrangements have been made to send Captain Knox there at once.

It will thus be seen that Sir N. O'Connor has himself approved both of the post office and the Political Agent, and how, while now agreeing to the latter much more important appointment, he can object to the former minor proposal, is not easy to understand, for, if the stationing of a native postal and medical subordinate at Koweit would constitute a breach of *status quo* (which he formerly denied), it is obvious that the appointment of a British Political Agent (or Resident as Sir Nicholas used to term it) would do so in a far wider degree. In fixing attention on the Bubiyan question he would appear to have overlooked the more recent and urgent cases which have made it imperative to have a British representative with Sheikh Mubarak, the Turkish invasion of Nejd, which diplomatic efforts at Constantinople have failed to avert. Our relations to the Turks and the Arabs in the region of Arabia must be regarded as a whole, and the recent action of the Sultan's Government in invading Nejd constitutes a breach on their part of the *status quo* which should free our hands from the understanding of 1891 and give us liberty of action in regard to Bubiyan also."

341. The Government of India, in these circumstances ordered by telegram dated 4th July 1904, that the Assistant Surgeon and his establishment should be detained at Bushire. At the same the following telegram was despatched to the Secretary of State:—

"Please refer to your telegram dated the 1st July 1904, regarding Koweit. The Assistant Surgeon for the Post Office is at Bushire and he was to start forthwith with Major Knox who had been selected for the Political Agency in compliance with the instructions contained in your telegram of 24th June. The departure of both has been deferred, but we trust that in view of the reported arrival of Turkish troops at Hail, which is a serious disturbance of the *status quo*, the Porte will be pressed for a very early reply about Bubiyan or that the officers may be allowed to proceed to Koweit. It is worth mentioning that the Turkish Consul General at Bushire is claiming to represent a Koweit Arab, though the Persian Governor is prepared to recognise the right of the British Consul General to protect him."

XL. Appointment of British Agents at Koweit.

June 1899—August 1903.

342. In June 1899 the Government of India sanctioned the appointment of a secret News Agent at Koweit on pay not exceeding Rs. 50 a month, as an experimental and temporary measure. In his letter No. 272, dated 26th November 1900, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf proposed that the News Agent at Koweit should be retained for the present and in paragraph 4 of our letter No. 923-E.A., dated 7th June 1901, this proposal was sanctioned.

343. In January 1902 in connection with a request which had been preferred by the Sheikh of Koweit for the establishment of a post office at that port, Colonel Kemball was directed to consider whether it would be desirable to appoint a native agent to reside at Koweit. Colonel Kemball objected to the appointment of such an agent there, since in the agreement of January 1899 the Sheikh had agreed not to receive a foreign agent without our consent, and our appointment of an agent might give an excuse to other powers to appoint agents. It was eventually decided to let the question lie over until a regular steamer service had been instituted between Koweit and other ports in the Persian Gulf. Such a service having been subsequently established by the British India Steam Navigation Company, Colonel Kemball in a letter, dated the 28th March 1903, again raised the question of the substitution of a better class of agent for the news-writer at Koweit. He was told in a demi-official letter that the



Viceroy would be glad to receive an official statement of his proposals, and this he submitted in his letter of the 5th June, in which he suggested the appointment of a native agent on a salary of Rs. 200 per mensem.

344. The question was further considered in connection with the proposals for the reorganisation of the Consular Service in Persia and the Gulf. In his telegram of the 1st June 1903 the Viceroy suggested that, if an Indian officer were appointed to the Consulate at Mohammerah, a gun-boat might be placed at his disposal, to enable him to visit Koweit from time to time. The Secretary of State replied that this proposal was not likely to be received favourably, and from the letter of the 18th June, from the India Office to the Foreign Office, it will be seen that at the same time His Lordship suggested that a gun-boat might be placed at the disposal of the Consul at Basrah to allow of his visiting Koweit. This proposal was approved by the Foreign Office.

345. It was soon found, however, that there was danger of Sheikh Mubarak embroiling himself in the internal disturbances in Arabia, and a proposal was made by Sir N. O'Connor to appoint a British officer as Agent at Koweit to keep the Sheikh in order.

346. The following telegraphic correspondence then took place between the Secretary of State, the Viceroy and the Political Resident:—

(1) Telegram, dated the 21st July 1903.

No. 625.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

Please see telegram No. 59 from the Consul at Basrah about Koweit. O'Connor suggests that a Resident should be appointed to Koweit to keep the Sheikh in order, as we have forbidden the Turks to interfere, and desire to maintain his independence. Please let me know what your views are.

(2) Telegram No. 1681-E., dated the 25th July 1903.

No. 626.

From—The Foreign Secretary, Simla,
To—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Shiraz.

Secretary of State telegraphs:—Please see telegram.....what your views are. Please telegraph your opinion. We had previously suggested that Indian officer as Consul at Mohammerah should have charge of Koweit and have a gun-boat placed at his disposal, but Secretary of State then preferred to maintain existing arrangements while agreeing to give Consul at Basrah a boat.

(3) Telegram, dated the 26th July 1903.

No. 627.

From—The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Shiraz,
To—The Foreign Secretary, Simla.

Your telegram of 25th July. Koweit. My opinion is that proposal for appointing Resident at Koweit, by which I understand that English officer is meant, is likely to impose on us inconvenient responsibility. Sheikh has frequently complained of raids upon the tribes and territory by Amir of Nejd, and Turkey is not able to protect him or afford redress. Presumably we are only concerned to maintain independence of Koweit by naval power, and it seems to me that, if we undertake to keep Sheikh in order, we must also assume responsibility for affording him redress in case of internal raids. Under existing circumstances Sheikh is bound to adopt his own measures for his protection, and even if such measures extend to indirect support of his friends who are now in revolt against Amir of Nejd, I do not see that we can or need object, nor do I see that Turks have any grounds for objection, as I do not know that they have ever attempted, nor, so far as I know, do they desire, to interfere between the Amir and the Wahabis. At the same time we should have more competent representative at Koweit with a view to assisting trade, and obtaining more accurate information of what is happening. Consul at Mohammerah might also be given charge of Koweit under orders (of) Resident in the Persian Gulf, who could, if gun-boat not available, place *Lawrence* at his disposal for the purpose of visiting Koweit occasionally.

(4) Telegram No. 1731-E., dated the 31st July 1903.

No. 628.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla,
To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

Colonel Kemball, who was consulted on Your Lordship's telegram of the 21st instant, replies:—My opinion is.....visiting Koweit occasionally.

There is force in Colonel Kemball's representations, but I consider that the advantages of the appointment of a British officer at Koweit would outweigh any probable disadvantages;



for (a) it would afford substantial evidence of our intention to preserve and utilise the privileges we already enjoy; (b) it should enable us gradually to acquire more reliable information as to true position in interior of Arabia, where difficult questions may easily arise out of condition of tribal politics; (c) it would give us better opportunities for watching the proceedings of the Turks on the borders of Koweit territory; and (d) it would strengthen our right to exert a controlling voice in the ultimate destination of the Baghdad Railway. We still consider the most economical solution would be to place Koweit and Mohammerah under a single Indian officer, and we do not understand reasons for which His Majesty's Government recently refused our proposal to this effect. If double jurisdiction is an obstacle, we support Sir N.O'Connor's proposal, but would deprecate any strengthening or negotiation of the connection between Koweit and Basrah.

No. 629.

(5) Telegram, dated the 26th August 1903.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,

To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

Please refer to your telegram of the 31st July. His Majesty's Government consider that, on the whole, the appointment of a British officer to reside permanently at Koweit cannot be regarded otherwise than as departure, only justifiable by clear necessity, from *status quo*, upon which, in discussions with the Porte, they have laid so much stress. Foreign Office also object to the Consul at Mohammerah being taken away from commercial duties of his office in Persia for the purpose of dealing with entirely different class of questions connected with Turkish Arabia. On the whole, existing system, under which the Resident in the Persian Gulf, or one of the officers, is ordinary channel of communication, is considered to work well. Should it be hereafter found necessary to establish closer touch with Koweit, it should be effected gradually by means of temporary visits by selected officer repeated at intervals until residence practically becomes permanent there.

346. Here the matter halted in August 1903, to get a fresh start a year later in consequence of events, which will be described in the next section.

XLI.—(1) Turkish aid to Ibn Rashid (2) Proposed British protest (3) appointment of Political Agent at Koweit, April—October 1904.

347. We have noted above (paragraphs 323 and 324) how the Turkish Government proceeded in April 1904 to despatch assistance in men, money and arms to Ibn Rashid, who had been for some time playing a losing game against Ibn Saud. Lord Curzon suggested to the Secretary of State that the Turks might again be warned against direct interference in the affairs of Nejd or it might be necessary for us to take measures in those regions in order to protect our interests.

Secret E August 1904
Nos. 286—373.

348. We shall now follow the course of events, which have ultimately culminated in the appointment of a Political Agent at Koweit by a perusal of the telegraphic correspondence up to date:—

No. 328.

(1) Telegram, dated the 2nd May 1904.

From—F. E. Caw, Esq., His Britannic Majesty's Officiating Consul at Basrah,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department.

Information has been received by me to the effect that the Turks will send one battery of artillery and six battalions of infantry from the Baghdad and Basrah Villayets on the Nejd expedition. A contract for six months' supplies has been made and the Amir has seized a large number of camels for transport purposes. I hear that the Sheikh of Koweit is in constant communication with Abdul Aziz bin Saud, and that the latter has taken Boreida and Aneyza.

Identity of interests may oblige the Sheikh to assist or he will lose the support of his tribes.

Add to the British Ambassador at Constantinople and repeated to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and the Government of India in the Foreign Department.



(2) Telegram, No. 1527-E.A., dated the 9th May 1904.

No. 330.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy,

To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

You have, I presume, received information from the Ambassador at Constantinople of the details of Turkish preparations to assist Ibn-i-Rashid against Saud. Major Cox and Mr. Crow both think that if the Turks help the former Sheikh Mubarak may be compelled to assist the latter, if he is to retain influence with tribes.

(3) Telegram, dated Persian Gulf, the 11th May 1904.

No. 333.

From—Major P. Z. Cox, C.I.E., Officiating Political Resident in the Persian Gulf,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.

It is evident from information received recently from Koweit that the Sheikh Mubarak is allowing quantities of ammunition and arms to be imported into Koweit by the Agents of Goguyer and others in spite of the periodical disclaimer. I should be inclined to proceed there and interview him on the subject; but, it would be convenient if, before I can do so, I could be instructed as to whether the Government of India desire that any special communication should be made to Mubarak with regard to his relations with Ibn Saud and our probable attitude towards the Turkish interference which prevails.

(4) Telegram, dated Bushire, the 16th May 1904.

No. 335.

From—Major P. Z. Cox, C.I.E., Officiating Political Resident in the Persian Gulf,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.

I have received a telegram from the Consul at Basrah reporting that 4,200 Turkish troops with ten guns left Samawa on the 8th May in order to support Bin Rasid. I have now received a letter dated 2nd May from Bin Saud in which he protests against Turkish invasion and begs for British protection for himself and his country. Finally he urges the use of the telegraph in obtaining a reply from the British Government. Sheikh Mubarak forwards to me at the same time an original letter from Bin Saud to himself of the same date as mine in which Bin Saud reminds Mubarak that last year when the Russian and French men-of-war visited Koweit harbour, the Russians pressed him, Bin Saud, to take their protection and that on that occasion, and also subsequently when the Russian Consul at Bushire repeated the overture he gladly rejected the offer altogether in consultation with Mubarak. He continues that the offer of assistance made by the Russians recurs to his mind now but that it is not palatable and he prefers following the example of Mubarak; and has therefore asked for British protection. If our reply proves discouraging he will doubtless try the Russian Consul. I request early instruction, and the presence of a gun-boat may be necessary in connection with affairs of Koweit owing to the *Lawrence* not being here.

(5) Telegram, No. 1662-E.A., dated the 20th May 1904.

No. 336.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department,

To—Major P. Z. Cox, C.I.E., Officiating Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Please refer to your telegram of the 11th and 16th May. Unless it is absolutely necessary you should not visit Koweit at present. Question of restraining the Turks from helping Ibn Rashid is under the consideration of His Majesty's Government. We have sent you papers on the subject by post.

(6) Telegram, No. 1663-E.A., dated the 20th May 1904.

No. 332.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy,

To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

The following telegram has been received from Major Cox:—Begins. I have received..... *Lawrence* not being here. Ends. We should be glad to know whether the representation has, as suggested in Curzon's telegram, dated the 28th April 1904, been made to the Porte, and, if so, what the result is. It may become necessary to revive the proposal to post a British Resident to Koweit in order to watch events there in the event of armed intervention in this quarter being persisted in by the Turks, but we could hardly interfere so as to prevent the importation of arms for Bin Saud.



No. 349.

(7) Telegram, dated the 25th May 1904.

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy.

Please refer to your telegram dated the 20th May 1904, regarding Nejd affairs. Representations were made by Sir N. O'Connor to the Porte on your telegram of the 25th April and were renewed on hearing from the Vice-Consul at Jedah that troops were being assembled at Medina in order to assist the Amir of Nejd. He says that these representations may perhaps make the Sultan reluctant, but that they will hardly turn him from the course which he can fairly urge is calculated to prevent internal troubles and disturbances of the *status quo*. He adds that he does not see on what grounds he can press the Turks to desist from helping the Amir, who is the party attacked without appearing as a distinct partisan of Bin Saud. He also adverts to question of general policy, and points out that on these grounds there are objections against preventing the Turks from assisting the Amir against Bin Saud whose apparent object is to re-establish the Wahabi dynasty throughout Central Arabia, result of which might in the near future be fraught with serious consequences and might imperil our authority at Koweit where in the existing condition of affairs our influence is yearly growing stronger. Sir N. O'Connor's idea is that we should confine ourselves for the present to maintaining intact territory of Koweit and awaiting developments, but that if the Turks persist, as he anticipates, in assisting the Amir, it might be expedient to reconsider the question of appointing a Resident at Koweit. Please let me have your views on the above questions. In view of our declared policy of prohibiting the traffic in arms, how would you propose to keep from interfering with the importation of arms for Bin Saud?

No. 350.

(8) Telegram, No. 1748-E A, dated the 26th May 1904.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy,
To—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

Please see your telegram of the 25th May 1904. Our position in regard to the affairs of Nejd is explained in our Secret Despatch No. 69, 24th March 1904. Representations might be made by Sir N. O'Connor to the effect that so long as the Turks refrained from interference in Nejd affairs, we also abstained from intervention; that we have no desire to assist Bin Saud directly or indirectly; but that our interests in Eastern Arabia are such that we cannot view with indifference intervention on behalf of one of the parties contending for supremacy in Nejd which must affect the tribes with which we have relations; that the relative rights of the two contending parties being so equal that the better course would be to leave both sides alone both in the interests of peace and with a view to the avoidance of internal troubles. It might further be pointed out that the Turks were unable in 1902 to prevent filibustering expedition against Koweit starting from Turkish territory, and that the present support of Bin Rashid may strengthen him beyond Turkish powers of control, and produce situation which, having regard to our relations with Mubarak, we could not view with indifference. As to Sir O'Connor's view of the general political aspect of the situation our opinion is as follows: the growth of our influence with Sheikh Mubarak has been concurrent with the success of his friend, Bin Saud, and our prestige at Koweit must suffer materially if, through our active intervention to prevent Mubarak assisting Bin Saud, and to prevent importation of arms, we permit Turkish influence to determine supremacy of the Turkish nominee against Bin Saud, which on analogy of the case of Hasa of 1871 would probably mean absorption of Nejd by the Turks. The destruction of Mubarak's influence and a possible attack from a direction which has not hitherto been contemplated on Koweit territory, the limits of which towards the interior are not defined, would naturally result from Turkish supremacy in Nejd. We might thus be forced again to assist Mubarak actively against the Turks. The re-establishment of the Wahabi dynasty, which is now rather territorial than fanatical, would, in our opinion, be open to less objection than this. We cannot agree therefore that our authority at Koweit would be imperilled by the success of Bin Saud, or that we can preserve Koweit territory intact better than by preventing Turkish intervention on behalf of Bin Rashid. With reference to my telegram, dated the 20th May 1904, we quite agree as to posting a Political Agent at Koweit and will immediately select one if you approve. We think it not improbable that such action might have a wholesome effect upon Turkish attitude of mind.

Up to the present no arrangements have been made with the Porte for combined suppression of traffic in the importation of arms which is briskly proceeding. It is not therefore a case of authorising Mubarak to import arms or even of relaxing existing measures for the prevention of the traffic, but for merely allowing matters to remain as they are. We can, if the Turks protest, offer to do our best to prevent trade on the understanding that they will refrain from interfering in Nejd affairs, and co-operate with us in the manner suggested in our Despatch dated the 31st March 1903. An admission of our supremacy in Koweit that would be useful to us hereafter would result from such a protest.



(9) Telegram, dated the 24th June 1904.

No. 361

From—His Majesty's Secretary of State for India,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy.

Please refer to your telegram, dated the 29th May 1904, regarding Nejd. Sir N. O'Connor has been instructed to address a representation to the Porte, making such use, as he may think judicious, of the arguments stated by you. You are authorised to send an officer immediately to Koweit as Political Agent. With reference to paragraph 5 of your Secret Despatch No. 76, dated the 31st March 1904, it has been decided to defer for the present fresh measures for the prevention of the importation of arms at Koweit.

(10) Telegram, No. 2060-E.A., dated the 26th June 1904.

No. 362.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department,

To—Major P. Z. Cox, C.I.E., Officiating Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

His Majesty's Secretary of State for India has sanctioned a Political Agent being sent immediately to Koweit. We propose Major Knox for the new appointment, and to replace him by Captain Trevor as your First Assistant and to leave Bunder Abbas vacant for the present. Please telegraph your opinion. Pending further consideration of the necessary permanent arrangement for the Agency, Major Knox would draw a special allowance of Rs. 400 and a sumptuary allowance of Rs. 100.

349. We have seen above (paragraph 341) that the Government of India telegraphed to the Secretary of State that both the newly appointed Political Agent, Koweit, as well as the Assistant Surgeon were detained at Bushire. The Secretary of State in reply telegraphed on 28th July:—

"Please refer to your telegram, dated the 4th July. It was not contemplated in my telegram, dated the 1st July, that the Political Agent for Koweit should be detained. The orders were intended to apply only to the Assistant Surgeon for the Post Office. Captain Knox should proceed at once to Koweit in a manner that unnecessary attention may not be attracted."

Major Knox was directed accordingly, on 3rd August, and he left Bushire for Koweit on 5th August.

350. The Foreign Department discussed then the instructions to be given to the new Political Agent, which should guide him in his conduct of affairs at Koweit. The notes recorded are instructive and are re-printed as Appendix J., and the letter finally approved containing our instructions addressed to the Political Resident for this communication to Captain Knox, is printed below (No. 2918-E.A., dated 7th September 1904):—

"I am directed to address you regarding the recently-created appointment of Political Agent at Koweit.

2. As notified in Foreign Department telegram No. 2457, dated the 3rd August 1904, Major Knox will take up the appointment, but will so act as not to attract unnecessary attention. His first object should be to cultivate and maintain close and friendly relations with Sheikh Mubarak and the principal personages in Koweit. The interests of British trade and traders at Koweit and in the adjacent tracts of Arabia should be safeguarded, and a vigilant watch kept over the proceedings* of the Turks on the boundaries of Koweit territory, on the part of the Turks† or any other Power, to interfere with, or disturb, the existing *status quo* or anything which would lead to a belief that any other Powers have‡ designs on, or in connection with, possible harbours within or without Koweit territory should at once be reported. Special regard in this respect should be paid to Khor Abdulla§ and the waters round Bubiyan Island and Um Kasr, but Captain Knox should be careful not to display undue apprehension or uneasiness on this point, or, in default of definite instructions to interfere actively in matters affecting these places.

* Pro. No. 628 in Secret E., July 1904, Nos. 620-659.

† Pro. No. 477 in Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 307-509; and Pro. No. 267 in Secret E., February 1903; Nos. 162-307.

‡ Memorandum by Lord Lansdowne, dated the 21st March 1902; Pro. No. 457 in Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 307-509.

§ Pro. No. 200 in Secret E., March 1904, Nos. 200-201.

3. Any attempt on the part of the Turks, or others acting from Turkish territory, to encroach on or beyond the limits of Hejejj and Subhaieh|| should be forthwith reported. Captain Knox should, however, endeavour to ascertain if these places really represent the bounds of Sheikh Mubarak's effective occupation at present.

|| Pro. Nos. 338 and 405 in Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 307-509.



4. He should further endeavour to secure early and accurate information regarding the struggle between the Ibn Rashid and Ibn Saud families for the supremacy of Nejd. His Majesty's Government have* instructed Sir Nicolas O'Connor to inform the Turkish Government that, as repeated warnings have been given to the Sheikh of Koweit against participating in any insurrectionary movement, they have a right to expect that the Porte will use their best endeavours to restrain the Amir of Nejd from embarking on a course of action, which might endanger the peace in those regions, and the Ambassador has been further requested to express the hope, in regard to the assistance given to Ibn Rashid, that the Turkish Government will avoid taking any action which might still further add to the disturbed condition of this part of Arabia, the tranquility of which is a matter of interest to His Majesty's Government as well as to that of the Sultan.

* Pro. No. 317 in Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 186-373.

† Pro. No. 357 in Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

In connection with this question I am to forward, for your information, a copy of the marginally noted correspondence regarding proposals to obtain more reliable information regarding the situation in the interior of Arabia.

Telegram from Secretary of State, dated the 8th February 1904.
Despatch to Secretary of State, No. 69, dated 26th March 1904.

5. The Government of India also desire to be furnished† with information regarding the trade in arms with Koweit, and how far, if at all, arms are being especially imported through Koweit for Ibn Saud. Pending further instructions the Political Agent should‡ neither authorise nor forbid Sheikh Mubarak to continue the trade which already exists.

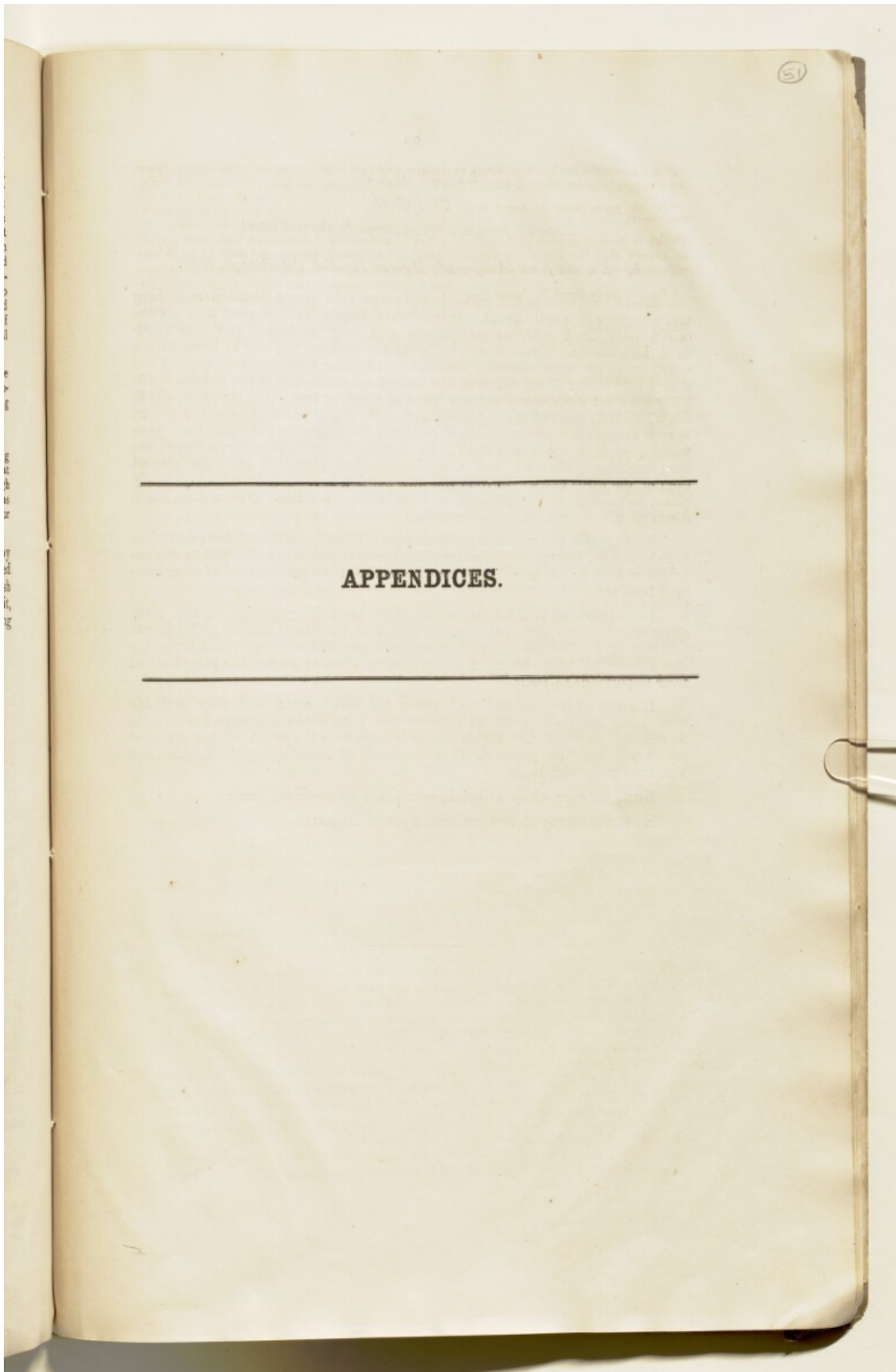
‡ Pro. No. 340 in Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

§ Pro. No. 3943-459 and 361 in Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

351. The news of the appointment Political Agent at Koweit was hailed by the Chief with feelings of ~~the~~ sincere joy, which he expressed in a letter addressed to Major Cox on 7th August 1904. He regarded it as a guarantee of the British protection of his interests. With the appointment of the Political Agent at Koweit, we enter a new stage in its history and this forms a convenient place for closing this précis.

25th September 1904.

J. A. SALDANA.





APPENDIX A.

(See preface.)

Extracts from non-official reports about Koweit.

I.—Extract from Stoequeler's Fifteen Months' Pilgrimage, 1832.

Koete, or Grane as it is called in the maps, is in extent about a mile long and a quarter of a mile broad. It consists of houses built of mud and stones, occasionally faced with coarse chunam, and may contain about four thousand inhabitants. These houses being for the most part square in form, with a courtyard in the centre (having the windows looking into the yard), present but a very bare and uniform exterior, like indeed all the houses in the Persian Gulf. They have flat roofs, composed of a trunk of the date tree. The streets of Koete are wider than those of Maskat or Bushire, with gutter running down the centre. A wall surrounds the town on the desert face, but it is more for show than protection, as it is not a foot thick. To keep up the farce, however, a trench has been dug around the wall, and two honeycombed pieces of ordnance protect each of the three gates. Beyond the wall nothing is to be seen but a vast sandy plain, extending to a distance of more than 60 miles. Not a tree, nor a shrub affords the eye a momentary relief.

Koete within the walls is equally sterile; it literally yields *nothing*; and when to this is added the fact of the water being far from sweet, it is difficult to conjecture how such a site could have been chosen for the establishment of four hundred families.

I was informed that the Arabs had only been in possession of the place about one hundred and fifty years, and that previously to that period it was occupied by *Englishmen* and their forces, who received or conquered it from the Portuguese, in whose hands it enjoyed some notoriety during the plentitude of their importance in India.

It certainly is a commodious harbour for small craft, and may probably have been occupied by the Portuguese (the English could have had nothing to do with it) on account of the command it gives over the mouth of the river of the Arabs and the power is thus conferred of interrupting the Turkish and Venetian trade with India.

Koete is governed by a Sheikh, who keeps up no armed force.

He levies a duty of two per cent. upon all imports.



II.—*Extracts from a paper read by Colonel Lewis Pelly before the Bombay Geographical Society, 1863, Volume XVII.*

March 3rd.—Mounted at 6-55 A.M. and rode south over beautiful undulating plains covered with grass and flowers. At 10 A.M. we had a false alarm. A body of men was seen approaching from the south, but it turned out to be a party belonging to Zobair returning from Koweit. There is at present a blood feud between the keepers of our baggage animals, who are Zobairs, and the Bedouins at present wandering here. Only about three weeks ago a number of sheep were stolen from Zobair, and five Bedouins killed. At 11 A.M. passed through a gap on a low range of sandstone. We saw this gap yesterday and it forms a capital landmark, where there is not even a path. We then rode for an hour over a low plain, with the sea on our left to Jarah. *This place belongs to Usuf bin Bider, a merchant of Koweit.* It consists of large three enclosures or forts, and about a dozen small gardens, and outside those a couple of hundred acres of barley cultivation. It is said that there are 100 inhabitants in the place with flocks of sheep and plenty of water. There are a dozen small wells of good drinking water on a patch of white ground to the south.

March 4th.—Yesterday evening we were visited by Mubarak, the second son of Sheikh Subah, Chief of Koweit. He had been sent out here by his father to accompany us into town. Suliman, a son of Yusuf bin Bider, came with him.

To-day we mounted at 6-30 A.M. and rode east and a little south, with the sea on our left, through a low, flat, salt plain; here and there slightly raised with sand and a little grass, something like the links of Scotland.

After two hours our direction was east and a little north. We now met Sheikh Abdullah, the eldest son of Sheikh Subah. He came out mounted on a fine camel with a number of horsemen, and after the usual salutations, we moved on and arrived at the gate of Koweit at 11-52 A.M. A very good house, with the courtyard opening on the harbour, and consisting principally of one long room, had been prepared for us.

Scarcely had we entered it, when Sheikh Subah himself came. He is a fine, stout, hale, old man, upwards of 80 years of age, rough in appearance and manner, but kind at heart. He has a son only about five years old. He sat a long time and seemed pleased and contented with his lot. Ours was an open house constantly filled with Arabs, but being the month of the Ramazan they would neither smoke nor drink. However, in the evening after sunset, Mubarak, Dowad, and Suliman would drop in and have a cup of tea with a cheroot.

March 5th.—This morning we visited Sheikh Subah. He sat in a ruin which had been his father's house on a coarse reed mat manufactured at Bussorah. He was very kind and told us all of the origin of his family and the rise of Koweit. He told us how his father, grandfather, wandering Aeneas like, first settled at the top of the Bubiyan Khore, and there plundered caravans from Bussorah, and vessels coming down the Shat-el-Arab. Driven from there he sailed for the ancient Granensis, and founded the city of Koweit a free port.

March 7th.—It was our intention to have left Koweit in the early morning, and our vessel was to have been launched with the midnight tide. But by some mistake she was still high and dry on the beach. And the good old Sheikh was so vexed that he sat the whole forenoon on the shore watching the rising of the water, and sent word as soon as the boat was floating. We left at 12 o'clock. The size of the vessel was about 40 tons. Wind east-north east. We sailed for the mouth of the Khore between the island of Bubiyan and the mainland, 3-30 steered east Pelecchee town bearing east-south-east. A bank called Subea to the northward of us a low island called Meschan right ahead. The Khore which we wish to enter north by west of us; anchored 7 P.M.; set sail 12-30 midnight; passed the Kasr Subea on the mainland at the entrance of Khore. This Kasr Subea is a mere square enclosure belonging to the Sheikh of Koweit, and uninhabited. Direction of the Khore here north and about one mile and a half broad.



March 8th.—Wind north-west strong. General direction of the Khore north-west by north. The wind is blowing a moderate gale, and but for the strong tide running up, we should be unable to make anything. However, with the assistance of the two tides we have got to the top of Bubiyan island. The portion of the Khore passed to day is a good mile broad all along, and we never got less than $5\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms in the middle. There are a good many boulders, especially along the eastern shore. The rising tide covers both banks for some distance inland, so as to make them swampy. Beyond is a sandy waste impregnated with salt, and here and there a few tufts of brushwood. There is only one place where a landing can be conveniently effected, and where brushwood is got in any quantity, that is on the western bank about two-thirds of the distance from the southern end.

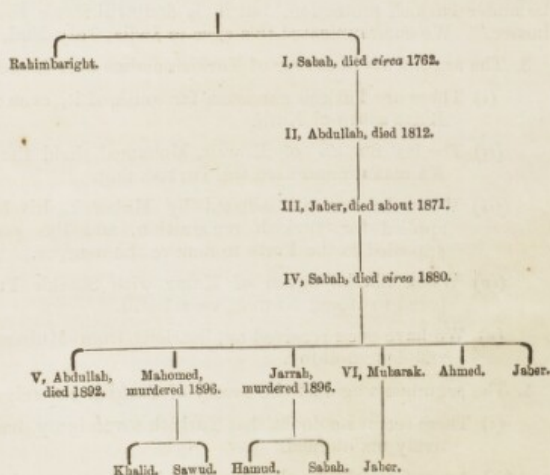
The island of Bubiyan is a desert. There are no date trees as marked on the chart. There is no habitation and no fresh water. This Khore now runs east north-east round the top of Bubiyan, and opens into the Khore Abdullah; but a small off-shoot from it about 40 feet wide runs north $\frac{1}{4}$ west.



APPENDIX B.

(See paragraph 15.)

Genealogical Table of the Koweit Chiefs.





APPENDIX C.

(See paragraph 51.)

Note on Koweit by W. Lee-Warner, dated the 23rd June 1898.

1. Koweit or Grane appears to be within the limits of Turkish influence if not of Turkish sovereignty. Volume 2, page 462, Curzon's Persia, says that north of Ujair on Katif the Ottoman dominion is established as far as Fao without dispute. Despatch No. 13, dated 5th January 1880, to Sir H. Layard, qualified our recognition of Turkish authority "where firmly established on the coast." But the telegram of 29th August 1888, to Sir W. White, went rather further—"We recognise Turkish jurisdiction on coast as far as Katif, and are anxious that it should be effectually exercised within those limits." Apparently no communication was made to the Porte in these terms (see Sir W. White, No. 347, dated 6th September 1888.) The question may, therefore, arise whether the Porte has "firmly established" its dominion over Koweit. Our latest expression of opinion is as follows:—

2. *February 25th, 1897.*—Viceroy agreed with us while Katif (far south of Koweit) was Turkish, Koweit was "doubtful." On July 17th, 1897, No. 107, Foreign Office telegraphed to Currie—"We have never acknowledged Koweit to be under Turkish protection, but it is doubtful if we could deny Turkish influence." We communicated this view to India, July 23rd, 1897.

3. The arguments in favour of Turkish claims over Koweit are—

- (i) There are Turkish garrisons far south of it, even in recent years at Bidaa south of Katif.
- (ii) The last Sheikh of Koweit, Mohamed, held the Turkish title of Kaimakam and used the Turkish flag.
- (iii) When he was assassinated by Mubarak, his brother, Mubarak applied for Turkish recognition, and the people of Zobarah appealed to the Porte to remove the usurper.
- (iv) When Sheikh Jasim of Katar with Sheikh Yusuf Ibrahim prepared to attack Koweit, we sat still.
- (v) We have even received applications from Mubarak for protection and done nothing.

4. The arguments against the theory of Turkish sovereignty are—

- (i) There seems no doubt that Turkish sovereignty has not been effectively maintained.
- (ii) Apart from the revolution and subsequent operations against Koweit there have been piracies in that neighbourhood, which the Porte has not restrained. So much so that on May 4th, 1897, we formally held the Sheikh responsible, and on December 4th, 1897, we telegraphed that there was nothing in our engagements with Turkey to hamper naval officers in bringing home to Sheikh Mubarak his responsibility for piracies.

5. The advantages of acquiring control over Koweit are (i) a very fair harbour, (ii) a potential railway terminus, (iii) a trade route. (iv) control over piracies and slave trade, (v) exclusion of Russian or other foreign influence.

6. But Turkey would protest against a wedge being driven in between the Shat-el-Arab and Hasa, and our title is not very clear, while our interests on the Persian side are more vital and demand our first attention.



APPENDIX D.

(See paragraph 63.)

Translation of Arabic letter, dated 23rd January 1899.

From—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL M. J. MEADE, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf,
To—SHEIKH MUBARAK-BIN-SABAH, Sheikh of Koweit.

After compliments.—In view of the signing to-day of the agreement, so happily concluded between you, Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sabah, on behalf of yourself, your heirs and successors, on the one part, and myself, on behalf of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, I now assure you, as Sheikh of Koweit, of the good offices of the British Government towards you, your heirs and successors as long as you, your heirs and successors scrupulously and faithfully observe the conditions of the said bond.

The three copies of the bond will be sent to India to be ratified by His Excellency Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Her Imperial Majesty's Viceroy and Governor-General in Council, and on their return one copy, duly ratified, will be conveyed to you, when I will take measures to send you, as agreed, a sum of Rs. 15,000 from Bushire Treasury. A most important condition of the execution of this agreement is that it is to be kept absolutely secret, and not divulged or made public in any way without the previous consent to the British Government.

Translation of Arabic Bond.

The object of writing this lawful and honourable bond is that it is hereby covenanted and agreed between Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm John Meade, I.C.S., Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident, on behalf of the British Government on the one part, and Sheikh Mubarak bin Sheikh Sabah, Sheikh of Koweit, on the other part, that the said Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Sabah of his own free will and desire does hereby pledge and bind himself, his heirs and successors not to receive the Agent or Representative of any Power or Government at Koweit, or at any other place within the limits of his territory, without the previous sanction of the British Government; and he further binds himself, his heirs and successors not to cede, sell, lease, mortgage or give for occupation or for any other purpose any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government for these purposes. This engagement also to extend to any portion of the territory of the said Sheikh Mubarak, which may now be in the possession of the subjects of any other Government.

In token of the conclusion of this lawful and honourable bond, Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm John Meade, I.C.S., Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Sabah, the former on behalf of the British Government and the latter on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors do each, in the presence of witnesses, affix their signatures on this the 10th day of Ramazan 1316, corresponding with twenty-third day of January 1899.

(Sd.) M. J. MEADE,

(Sd.) MUBARAK-SABAH

Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

(L. S.)

(Witnesses.)

(Sd.) E. WICKHAM HORE, *Captain,*

(Sd.) MUHAMMAD RAHIM

I.M.S.

BIN ABD-UL-NABI,

Saffar (L. S.)

(Sd.) J. CALCOTT GASKIN.



APPENDIX E.

(See Section XIV.)

Communications made at Constantinople in regard to the proposal of
the Baghdad Railway Commission to make Koweit their Railway
Terminus. April 1900.

No. 252 of Secret E., October 1900, Nos. 175-281.

In his Despatch No. 130 dated 9th
April 1900 Sir N. O. Conon reported :—

I took an opportunity yesterday afternoon, in the course of an interview with the
Minister for Foreign Affairs, to refer to the visit which the German Railway Commission had
paid to Koweit with a view, as it was reported, to a harbour and terminal station for the
Baghdad Railway.

I said that Her Majesty's Government did not desire to interfere with the *status quo*
or with the Sultan's authority in those parts, but that they could not, in view of their great
interests in the Persian Gulf, view with indifference any action which would alter the existing
condition of affairs or give another power special rights or privileges over territory belonging
to the Sheikh of Koweit with whom Her Majesty's Government had certain agreements. *

The same afternoon the German Ambassador called upon me. I enquired about the
movements of the Railway Commission, and whether they had delayed here on their way to
Berlin. Baron von Marschall said that they had stopped only a very short time, and that he had
had little opportunity of talking to them.

I then said that I had heard from Basrah that they had visited Koweit, and that I thought
it would be in the interest of the great railway enterprise which they had undertaken that he
should know that Her Majesty's Government had an agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit,
which, although not opposed to the *status quo*, yet prevented the Sheikh from making any
concession of territory to another power without the consent of Her Majesty's Government. I
was anxious, I said, that nothing should occur to deter British capitalists from participating
upon fair terms in the construction of the Baghdad Railway, and I thought it therefore a
friendly act to warn him of the position in which the Sheikh of Koweit stood towards Her
Majesty's Government.

There was nothing antagonistic to the Ottoman Government in this position, but our
interests were so great in the Persian Gulf that we could not afford to look with indifference
on any proposals tending to alter the condition of affairs. I felt sure also that it was not in
the interests of the Anatolian Railway to do anything which would disquiet British subscri-
bers, and he knew that we were particularly alive to any proceedings in those parts.



APPENDIX F.

(See paragraph 135.)

**Proposal made by Sir N. O'Connor to advise Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit
to keep quiet. February 1901.**

In December 1900, there were reports of preparation for war between the two parties, and Sir N. O'Connor addressed the following important despatch, dated 10th February 1901, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, discussing the situation:—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt by yesterday's messenger of Your Lordship's despatch No. 29 of the 5th February enclosing a memorandum on the affairs of Koweit ending with Mr. Wratislaw's despatch No. 44 of the 22nd November.

Your Lordship has since received Mr. Wratislaw's confidential despatch No. 47 of the 14th December reporting a conversation with the Vali of Basrah, in which he warned His Excellency of our interest in Koweit, and also a further despatch, marked No. 50 Confidential of the 28th December, stating that the Sheikh of Koweit and his partisans are making fresh preparations for a campaign against the Amir of Nejd. Mr. Wratislaw supplements this last despatch by a private letter, in which he states that "both Mubarak and Abdul Aziz are preparing for war as fast as they can, and that, though it would be contrary to precedent if a pitched battle takes place, the two Chiefs are very much incensed against one another, and are doing their best to bring their men up to the scratch.

The Amir of Nejd is, as Your Lordship is aware, a Chief of considerable influence, whose authority extends over a wide circuit of Central Arabia. He is generally considered as well disposed towards England, and it is desirable to avoid, if possible, anything which would alienate his sympathies; but as far as I know there have been no political or personal relations between him and any British official of recent date, though I believe Colonel Loch contemplated, had he remained at Baghdad, paying him a visit.

The Sheikh of Koweit appears to be a ruler of considerable determination of character, wily and self-seeking. He is probably emboldened by his convention with the British Government to go farther than he otherwise would do, and possibly counts upon His Majesty's Government saving him from consequences of an unsuccessful attack upon his powerful neighbour, Abdul Aziz, of Nejd.

An outbreak of hostilities between the two Chiefs can hardly fail to bring the Turks into the field, and to offer the Ottoman Government and the astute Vali of Basrah, Mohsin Pasha, a further opportunity of affirming the Sultan's suzerainty, which the Sheikh seems of his own accord to have admitted last November, while at the same time he promised to cease coquetting with Foreign Powers.

His Majesty's Government may thus be placed in a difficult position and be forced either to raise an unpleasant question with the Ottoman Government, or to assert effective control over Koweit, or else sacrifice the privileged position acquired by the Convention of January 1899. It is hardly to be expected that the Sheikh of Koweit will respect an Agreement from which he derives no security and little material advantage.

Being aware how sensitive the Sultan is in regard to British Policy in the Persian Gulf, and how much his feelings in this respect are worked on by another Power, I should regret being obliged, without very strong reason, to do anything that would encourage His Majesty's anxiety in this respect and more particularly at the present moment, when it is our duty to try and stave off any complications which might possibly lead either to intervention or to the loss of prestige and influence.

It is well, therefore, to consider whether any personal influence can be exerted on the Sheikh of Koweit, and whether any steps can be taken to dissuade him from joining Abdurrahman-bin-Faysul and Sadoun in an attack upon the Amir of Nejd, or otherwise provoking disturbances which may lead to serious trouble in those parts.

I have consulted Mr. Wratislaw as to what action, under present circumstances, he thinks ought to be taken with a view to exercising a pacific influence upon the rival parties. He believes Mubarak will disregard mere advice; but he says that the Amir of Nejd has an Agent at Basrah through whom he could intimate to His Highness in a friendly and confidential manner that we intend to restrain the Sheikh of Koweit, and request him equally to abstain from aggression.



We might, at the same time, inform the Sublime Porte that His Majesty's Government have, in view of the brewing disturbances, instructed the Resident at Bushire to proceed to Koweit and advise the Sheikh to be quiet. Your Lordship may think it advisable that Captain Kemball should warn the Sheikh of the responsibility he will incur if he wantonly provokes war, and let him clearly understand that the Agreement of the 23rd January 1899, gives His Majesty's Government the right to expect that their advice will be followed.

Whether it will be advisable to go farther and hint to the Sheikh that a refusal to comply with this advice may have serious personal consequences, I must leave to His Majesty's Government to decide.

I am not anxious to exaggerate the danger of the situation or to anticipate complications which may not occur, and I believe it is quite possible that the Ottoman Government will again succeed in preventing this internecine feud from coming to an armed conflict.

At the same time the state of affairs must be regarded as serious, and in view of our convention with the Sheikh Mubarak and our interests in the Persian Gulf, His Majesty's Government will probably deem it advisable to take some means of showing that they do not stand aloof in the matter, and to have a ship of war ready which can be sent at short notice to Koweit.

The Foreign Office forwarded Sir N. O'Connor's despatch to the India Office for the expression of Lord Hamilton's view. The India Office thereupon despatched the telegram, dated 26th February 1901 (see paragraph of the précis.)



APPENDIX G.

(See Section XFIII paragraphs 144-146.)

- (1) Correspondence in Europe regarding the proposed assumption of protectorate over Koweit.
- (2) Misunderstanding between the Government of India and Her Majesty's Government as regards the former's attitude in the matter. May-June 1901.

In May 1901 overtures were made by Ibn Rashid to Mr. Wratislaw with a view to his being taken under British protection. Sir N. O'Connor reported the fact to the Foreign Office in his despatch No. 61, dated 29th May 1901. On being consulted by the Foreign Office, Lord George Hamilton consulted Lord Curzon, and on receipt of His Excellency's telegram, dated 8th June (paragraph 145) gave expression to the following views in the India Office letter No. 249, dated 14th June 1901 :—

"I am to enclose a copy of a telegram, dated the 8th June, giving the views of the Governor-General of India on the situation. At the outset I am to observe that Lord Curzon's statement relative to the declaration of an open protectorate "to which sanction of Foreign Office was reported in your telegram of 24th December 1898, but withdrawn in your telegram of 6th January 1899," is not thoroughly accurate: and since it is important that the facts of the case should be remembered, I am to recapitulate them. In your letter of the 5th December 1898, you stated that, in Lord Salisbury's opinions the question, of establishing a protectorate over Koweit and its consequent responsibilities was a matter primarily for the consideration of the Government of India. If that Government were of opinion that the protectorate could be undertaken without difficulty or inconvenient extension of the duties of the police already exercised by it in the Persian Gulf, Lord Salisbury would approve of such a step, and His Lordship would diplomatically support such a protectorate. Accordingly, on 24th December, the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, was informed that the Foreign Office would approve of a protectorate on the understanding and the conditions set forth, and His Excellency was asked to state what measures he could take to make the protectorate effective, on the supposition that he could rely on Her Majesty's Government for diplomatic support. The Viceroy did not accept the conditions or reply to the enquiry. Meanwhile a fresh proposal was put before the Viceroy on the 6th January based upon your letter, dated the 4th January. As a precautionary measure, it was proposed to take immediate steps for obtaining from the Sheikh an arrangement not to take cede, lease, mortgage, or otherwise alienate or give for occupation any portion of his territory to the Government or the subjects of another Power without the consent of the British Government. This distinct engagement with certain minor additions was, with the assistance of the Government of India, in due course, obtained: and on 18th January 1899, Lord Salisbury authorised you to give to the Secretary of State for India the assurance that His Lordship "did not contemplate that by according that assistance the Indian Government would in the slightest degree pledge themselves to take any action, or to accept any liability under any circumstances that might arise in the future." That undertaking is still in force, and the distinction between the proposal for the protectorate on certain conditions which were never accepted by the Government of India, and the non-alienation engagement which was obtained for Her Majesty's Government by the Government of India at the suggestion of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has never been lost sight of in the office.

Circumstances have now arisen, in consequence of the engagement into which the Sheikh of Koweit entered, which have led to the suggestions made by Sir N. O'Connor forwarded with your letter of the 30th May. The proposals both with regard to Koweit and to Nejd are matters for the decision of the Marquess of Lansdowne, and I am to forward, for His Lordship's consideration, the opinion recorded by Lord Curzon. It is obvious that a declaration of open protectorate over Koweit, and the deputation of a Mission to Nejd, may involve serious responsibilities if the Turkish Government should either resent those measures or take steps to counteract them. The motives by which the Sheikh may be actuated as suggested by the Viceroy, will not be confined to him. The Amir of Nejd will equally be desirous of making the best bargain he can for himself by playing off one Power against another and, in Lord George Hamilton's opinion very little reliance can be placed on the good faith of either. Engagements made to protect Koweit and to restrain the Sheikh from future aggression upon Nejd may lead to serious interference in the affairs of both Chiefs, and to the establishment of authoritative control, which might at times require a material force upon the spot for its enforcement. This force the Indian Government cannot undertake to supply.

In transmitting the Viceroy's telegram for the consideration of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I am to observe that Lord George Hamilton, whilst fully realising the awkwardness of allowing affairs in Koweit to drift without a more definite declaration of policy



from the British Government, is not disposed to incur the difficulties and embarrassments which must ensue from the declaration of a protectorate over either of the territories of the Chiefs of Koweit and Nejd."

This view was concurred in by the Foreign Office.

With reference to the above letter, the Government of India found it necessary to address the following despatch to explain the point of misunderstanding between the Government of India and Her Majesty's Government as regards the attitude of the former on the protectorate over Koweit proposed by the former in their telegram, dated the 24th December 1898:—

"We desire to refer to Your Lordship's letter to the Foreign Office, dated 14th June 1901, on the subject of Koweit, which contains certain statements that appear to us to call for explanation.

In this letter Your Lordship challenges the accuracy of the statement contained in the Viceroy's telegram No. 935-E.A., dated 8th June, that the sanction of the Foreign Office in the declaration of an open protectorate over Koweit, which was reported in your telegram of 24th December 1898, was withdrawn in your telegram of 6th January 1899, and Your Lordship adds that the then Viceroy, Lord Elgin (1) did not accept the conditions proposed in the telegram of 24th December 1898, or reply to the enquiry contained in it. Further on, in Your Lordship's letter, it is stated that the Indian Government cannot undertake to supply the material force required to support the proposed protectorate, and to establish the authoritative control over the Sheikh that it would involve.

With reference to these remarks, we desire to point out that, while it is true that Lord Elgin did not reply to the enquiry contained in your telegram of 24th December 1898, and to that extent may be held not to have signified his acceptance of the conditions attached to the approval of the protectorate, it is not the case, as would seem to be implied, that His Excellency refused to accept the conditions, or that the Government of India had declared themselves to be unable to supply the force needed for its assertion and maintenance. As a matter of fact, this question was never considered by the Government of India. Your telegram of 24th December 1898 was repeated to the Resident in the Persian Gulf on 29th December, and that officer replied on 30th December. On 2nd January, Lord Elgin noted— "This is a matter of some importance and deserves more consideration than I can now give to it. The case might be seen in the Military Department, and then be submitted to Lord Curzon." The present Viceroy assumed charge of his office on the 6th January 1899. The opinion of the Military Department was communicated to the Foreign Department on 17th January, but, before it could be submitted to His Excellency, Your Lordship's telegrams of 5th and 6th January 1900 were received, in which it was stated that Sir N. O'Connor had urged that any formal declaration of a protectorate would be considered as little short of hostile act by Turkey, and that Lord Salisbury concurred in his opinion that at present any overt act towards establishing a protectorate should be avoided. We venture to think that the communication contained in these telegrams may not inaccurately be described as a withdrawal of the approval of a protectorate, which was contained in your telegram of the 24th December 1898. It is not necessary to discuss what would have been our reply to the telegram of the 24th December if these latter telegrams had not been received, for, as we have said, we had not the opportunity of fully considering the matter. But we should not like to commit ourselves at all definitely to the presumption that the Government of India at that date would have been unwilling or unable to face the responsibilities involved in the assertion of a protectorate over Koweit, since, unless we are prepared to see that place pass ultimately under the control of some other European Power, it is difficult to say what other practical solution can be suggested."



APPENDIX H.

(See Section XIX.)

Communications in London and Constantinople on Koweit affairs.
August—September 1901.

Important communications took place in August and September 1901 at London and Constantinople. Considerable pressure was being exercised on the Ottoman Government by German and Russian Embassies, and though the proposal of the Vali of Basrah to use force against the Sheikh had been rejected by the Council of Ministers, Tewfik Pasha informed Sir N. O'Connor that Koweit was regarded as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire.

A warning given by the Commander of the *Perseus* to the Captain of a Turkish corvette off Koweit that no troops would be permitted to land was largely magnified in transmission, and occasioned further protests.

Tewfik Pasha enquired on the 29th August whether Her Majesty's Government intended to establish a protectorate, and on the same day the German Embassy in London received a pressing instruction to state that a British protectorate would be contrary to the Treaty of Berlin, and that, in view of her interest in Koweit as the future terminus of the Anatolian Railway, Germany would be compelled to regard such a proceeding as an unfriendly act.

The reply in each case was that His Majesty's Government had no such intention, Sir N. O'Connor adding the reservation, "*provided that Turkey did not force our hands by interfering with the Sheikh.*"

On the 3rd September, Count Metternich called to say "that, if by threats of force His Majesty's Government prevented the Sultan from landing troops at Koweit, they were refusing to recognise the Sultan's authority with which they had stated (in a memorandum communicated by the King to the German Emperor) that they did not desire to interfere in those parts, and that the German Government considered that Koweit formed unquestionably part of the territories belonging to the Sultan."

Sir T. Sanderson promised to report his observations to Lord Lansdowne, and said he could at once state that His Majesty's Government has no desire to disturb the *status quo*.

Next day telegrams were communicated by the Turkish Ambassador protesting against the reported intention to declare a British protectorate, and describing the Convention of 1899 as without validity, but the Sultan had meanwhile been advised by the German Government to be satisfied with the assurances given to Count Metternich, and to ask for their repetition.

On the 6th September Sir N. O'Connor was sent for by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The following is the report, dated the 6th September 1901, of his visit to Tewfik Pasha:—

"The Sultan, he said, had learnt that His Majesty's Government, in replying to the representations of Constaki Pasha about Koweit, had referred to a convention with the Sheikh, and now wished to learn the terms and nature of this arrangement. His Majesty was well aware of its being a cardinal principal of His Majesty's Government not to do anything prejudicial to the interests and integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

After affirming Turkish sovereignty over Koweit in the same terms, reported in my despatch No. 310 of the 28th August, His Excellency went on to say that it was not the case that the concentration of troops which had been the subject of my enquiry was directed against Koweit. Its object was the prevention of hostilities between the Sheikh and the Amir of Nejd, and His Majesty had authorised him to assure me that there was no intention of either landing troops at Koweit or of attacking it by land. The Sultan only desired an assurance that there were no political aims of His Majesty's Government affecting his sovereign rights in these regions, and has no wish to disturb the existing *status quo*.

In reply, I said that I took note of his assurances that *there would be no attack on Koweit by land or sea; that it was the fact that there was a convention between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh, due to our predominant interests in Koweit and the adjoining regions; that it has been in no way inspired by hostility to the Ottoman Government that the Sheikh, with whom it was concluded, was regarded by us as territorially independent, and considered himself to be so, while willing to recognise the Sultan in his capacity of Caliph as his spiritual*



Chief; that I did not hesitate to assure him that his spiritual sovereignty would not in any way be questioned by His Majesty's Government. I had already, I said, informed His Excellency that His Majesty's Government did not intend to occupy Koweit, provided that on their side the Ottoman Government did not force our hands, and refrained from any action likely to do so; and that I now again assure him that we were satisfied with the status quo and had no desire to disturb it. I added that I did not understand the message sent me two days before by His Majesty's Secretary-General, and that I had been unable to give any answer with reference to Your Lordship, as I could not admit the right of intervention of a third power in a question which was being created between the two Governments.

As the Sultan, no doubt, expected information as to the precise nature of the convention, and some sort of declaration, recognising his sovereignty over Koweit, I was not sure that he would be satisfied with Tewfik Pasha's report of this conversation—"His Majesty has told the Minister of Foreign Affairs to inform me that the Haiffa Railway question would be definitely settled in a few days, evidently as a bribe, in the hope of extracting satisfactory assurance as to Koweit."

The assurances given by His Excellency on this occasion were considered by the Ottoman Government "of a nature to terminate the present controversy," and Anthopoulos Pasha was instructed to ask for their confirmation.

The following note was accordingly addressed to him:—

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Anthopoulos Pasha.

FOREIGN OFFICE,

11th September 1901.

Your Excellency,

I have taken note with satisfaction of the telegram from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicated by you on the 9th instant, in which His Excellency states that the Turkish Government will not send troops to Koweit, and will maintain the *status quo* there, on condition that His Majesty's Government will abstain from occupying that place or establishing a British protectorate there.

I have pleasure in confirming the assurance which has been given to His Excellency by His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that, provided the Turkish Government abstain from sending troops to Koweit and respect the *status quo* there, His Majesty's Government will not occupy that place or establish a British Protectorate over it.

I am, etc.,

LANSDOWNE.

In his telegram, dated 7th September 1901, Lord Lansdowne had instructed Sir N. O'Connor to communicate the same expression of satisfaction to the Porte.

In his despatch dated 10th September 1901 Sir N. O'Connor reported that he had communicated the note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and added:—

"In the course of the recent negotiations I had not only to try to dissuade the Ottoman Government from attacking Koweit, but also to make it quite clear that His Majesty's Government, although willing to respect the *status quo*, could not admit the Sultan's sovereignty, or suffer any interference with the affairs of Koweit. I felt that, unless we mentioned this principle and held our ground firmly, our position would be very difficult if the German Government attempt, as they most likely will do, to treat directly with the Sultan for a terminal station at Koweit for the Bagdad Railway, and to ignore the existing Agreement between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh Mubarak. They have already, as shown by the report of the Railway Commission, endeavoured to negotiate direct with the Sheikh and have failed. In proportion as we make it difficult for them to do so with the Sultan, we increase, I venture to think, the chances of their being obliged to come to a special understanding with His Majesty's Government. It can hardly be in their interest, in view of our friendly attitude towards their scheme, and the possible co-operation of the London market, to alienate British sympathy or to create difficulties and embarrassments for the Anatolian Railway Company in a question which may prove in the end to be mainly a matter of form.

In a secret telegram, dated the 7th September, Lord Lansdowne, while pointing out that "the situation requires very careful handling, as our arrangement with the Sheikh is not very precise, and it was entered into without the knowledge or concurrence of the Porte," instructed Sir N. O'Connor that "we cannot recede from our position, and if the Porte should insist on raising question of their rights, we may have to convert into something much more precise the present indefinite understanding with the Sheikh."



In view, however, of the assurances recorded in the note quoted above, Sir N. O'Connor did not find occasion to communicate these instructions, and controversy with the Porte rested for the moment on the basis of a mutual maintenance of the *status quo*. The Turkish Ambassador expressed himself well satisfied with the present state of affairs (October 1st), and on the same day Sir N. O'Connor was assured by the Minister for Foreign Affairs "most positively that the Imperial Government had no intention whatsoever of occupying or attacking Koweit." *The understanding then was that the two Governments were to co-operate in maintaining the peace, Turkey endeavouring to restrain the Amir, while Her Majesty's Government were to do what they could to discourage the Sheikh from aggressive action. Mubarak was told that the good offices of Her Majesty's Government will be extended to him only if he follows their advice.*

The British Ambassador at Berlin, Sir F. Lascelles, wrote to the Marquess of Lansdowne on 13th September 1901:—

In the different conversations which I have had with Baron von Richthofen since my return to Berlin, allusion has been made to the question of Koweit, and I have tried to explain to His Excellency that His Majesty's Government, although they have no wish to annex or proclaim a protectorate over Koweit, consider that the Sultan's authority is of a vague character and that an attempt on his part to assert that authority by sending troops would lead to serious complications.

On the 13th September I again saw Baron von Richthofen, and said that I was glad to think that the incident might now be considered as closed. His Excellency replied that he hoped that this was the case, although he had not yet heard from Constantinople that the Turkish Government were satisfied. His Excellency repeated what he had said to me previously that the German Government had been unfavourably impressed at hearing that the Commander of one of His Majesty's ships in the Persian Gulf had talked of a protectorate over Koweit at the very moment when the King had handed to the Emperor a memorandum, in which it was stated that His Majesty's Government did not desire to interfere with the *status quo* or the Sultan's authority in those parts. The German Government considered that Koweit was a portion of the Turkish Empire, and it was certainly a high handed measure to prevent the Sultan from sending troops to any part of his dominions.

I replied that I was glad of this opportunity to explain to His Excellency that the memorandum which the King had handed to the Emperor was not to be considered as a formal document officially presented to the German Government. It consisted of somewhat hastily written notes for the King's personal use in case the different questions mentioned in it should be brought forward in conversation with the Emperor. Personally I was glad that the Emperor should have been put in possession of Your Lordship's views; but as regards the question of Koweit, it was evident that His Majesty's Government considered that *the Sultan's authority, with which they did not wish to interfere, did not prevent a large measure of independence on the part of the Sheikh, which was also part of the status quo*. I trust, however, that as the Porte has declared that they did not intend to send troops to Koweit, and that His Majesty's Government has declared that they did not intend to proclaim a protectorate, the question may be regarded as settled.

A memorandum upon various subjects, including Koweit, drawn up by Lord Lansdowne for the King's personal use, and handed by His Majesty to the German Emperor at their meeting, in August 1901 had elicited a formal reply from the German Government, which Count Metternich had left at the Foreign Office on the 3rd September 1901.

It was now explained to him (see despatch of Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Lascelles dated, 12th September 1901), that the memorandum, which had been hastily prepared, was a purely informal and unofficial document. The statement referred to by Count Metternich on the 3rd was a repetition of Sir N. O'Connor's language in 1900, which might be more correctly described as having stated that *His Majesty's Government have no desire to interfere with the Sultan's authority as it exists in those parts*.

There could be no doubt that this authority was of a very limited description. The Sheikh belonged to a class of native Chiefs enjoying a large measure of practical independence, with whom His Majesty's Government found it necessary to have direct relations for the sake of the maintenance of tranquillity and the protection of British trade.

Therefore, although ready to maintain the status quo, His Majesty's Government had been unable to acquiesce in attempts recently made by Turkey



to impose on the Sheikh conditions from which he had hitherto been free. They had considered it a matter for direct and friendly discussion with the Porte, who now regarded the incident as closed, and Count Metternich was informed of the assurances exchanged.

Lord Lansdowne on his return to London said to Count Metternich that it was necessary to bear in mind that, where minor Eastern States were concerned, it was not unusual to find that they owed a divided allegiance to more than one Power.

The German Memorandum stated that *Koweit has an importance for Germany merely as the proposed terminus of the Baghdad Railway*, and gives an undertaking that the Manager of the Railway Company will be instructed to come to an understanding with the British Government when the time for purchasing land for railway terminus and a landing-place at Koweit shall have come. Count Metternich has since confirmed this assurance in conversation with Lord Lansdowne, adding that the railway might be made five years or fifty years hence, or not at all, but that, when it was made, it was important for Germany to find a peaceful condition of things in that part of the Gulf.



APPENDIX I.

(See Section XXVI paragraphs 222-243.)

Communications in Europe about Turkish occupation of Um-Kasr,
Bubiyan Island and Subbiyah, February—March 1902.

On 27th February 1902 the Viceroy repeated to the Secretary of State
Colonel Kemball's telegram dated 25th
February, reporting the establishment of
Turkish military posts at Um-Kasr and on the Bubiyan Island [see telegram
No. (2) on page 53 *ante*].

The Viceroy's telegram was repeated to Sir N. O'Connor, and on 4th March
the Foreign Office wired as follows to
him:—

No. 310.

No. 421.

"Viceroy's telegram of 27th February repeated
to you in my telegram No. 33.

I should be glad to have your observations. Do you believe that we can show Bubiyan
or Um-Kasr to be within territory of Sheikh of Koweit, and could we reasonably contend that
activity of Turks at these places is a disturbance of the *status quo* in which Koweit is con-
cerned?"

Sir N. O'Connor replied by telegram dated 4th March:—

"I have no arguments in support of Sheikh's claim to Bubiyan Island and I never supposed
that his authority extended over it. As to
Um-Kasr, Consul of Basrah thinks that it may be
important if recent survey proves the channel between Bubiyan and mainland to be navi-
gable, and he understands that the Sheikh's claim that in favourable seasons it has been
cultivated by people from Koweit, and that Turks did not exercise authority there until recent
events, but these are poor arguments in favour of Sheikh's claim. It is, moreover, nearer
Zobair than Koweit. I think that it will be difficult to maintain, with the knowledge we
possess, that action of Ottoman authorities in either place amounts to a disturbance of *status
quo* at Koweit."

I am certainly in favour of maintaining Sheikh's authority over Koweit, including Bay
and Kasima, but to block all access to Gulf practically up to Fao would, I fear, lead to trouble.

On 3rd March 1902 Colonel Kemball proposed that Turkey should be
told to leave Bubiyan forthwith [telegram
No. (3) page 54 *ante*].

This telegram was repeated to the Secretary of State. Sir N. O'Connor,
on being consulted by the Foreign Office,
replied on 11th March 1904:—

"Your telegram No. 40 and Resident at Bushire's proposal.

It seems to me that such fishery rights are proverbially unsatisfactory for assertion of
territorial jurisdiction, and that there is no
possible object in raising a conflict with Turks
about Bubiyan island while leaving them in occupation of Um-Kasr.

British Consul at Basrah says that island generally uninhabited and that the fishermen
from Koweit stay there part of year, but he says nothing about their paying duties to the
Sheikh.

I have not heard yet that Turks have occupied Subbiyah and I do not know that it is
worth holding or if Sheikh has a more substantial claim to it.

I am pretty sure that Ottoman Government will refuse to evacuate Bubiyan for any
reasons we are able to prefer. It would be unpleasant to meet with a rebuff and equally so to
be obliged to drive them out. Besides we should be drifting to an eventual occupation and
protectorate and probably encouraging the Russians to seize some place in the Gulf as a coal-
ing station.

I see no objection, however, to telling Minister of Foreign Affairs that we cannot admit
without further enquiry that occupation of Um-Kasr and Bubiyan is not a disturbance of the
status quo as regards Koweit, and that I am instructed by Your Lordship to inform him that
we do not regard Sheikh's rights as in any way prejudiced by action of the Turkish authorities."

Sir N. O'Connor was authorized by Marquess of Lansdowne to make to the
Porte the representation suggested in the
last paragraph.

No. 436.



The following telegram was addressed by Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Lansdowne on 16th March 1902:—

No. 445.

"I telegraphed to British Consul at Basrah on 5th March for his opinion (? as to) Sheikh's rights to Um-Kasr and Bubiyan, but owing to interruption line his reply of 7th only reached me to-day. It is as follows:—

No. 26, March 7th. Your telegram No. 11. *Survey of Um-Kasr Channel shows place to be most important and even better adapted for railway terminus than Koweit. But while it is highly desirable to secure it, I fear Sheikh's claim is very shadowy.*

He asserts that it was occupied by Koweit people in time of his grand-father, but even if this be true, it has remained uninhabited for many years (? without his) exercising any authority. He also says that Koweit now has sometimes used it as port for Basrah, but, on the other hand, Turks seem to have little claim beyond present occupation.

Bubiyan is on different footing. It is regularly used as fishing ground for some months during year by Arabs acknowledging the Sheikh of Koweit and by no others. In my opinion claim is good.

Sheikh has sent men to occupy Bubiyan. He informed Senior Naval Officer that the Bedawi who threatened Turkish troops at Um-Kasr were not his men, but Turkish subjects, which hardly supports his claim as though Arabs themselves said that they recognized the Sheikh. His statements in general seem to be unreliable."

With reference to his telegram of 4th March, Sir N. O'Connor wrote on 17th March 1902 to the Marquess of Lansdowne:—

"I spoke to Minister, Foreign Affairs, to-day in sense of last paragraph of my telegram No. 30 of 11th March as authorised by Your Lordship. I also told him that I was instructed to remonstrate against the movements of troops in the vicinity of Koweit as tending to keep country in a state of alarm and disturbance and to impede our efforts to keep Sheikh of Koweit quiet in accordance with agreement with Porte and His Excellency's repeated request.

Minister, Foreign Affairs, assured me of desire of Ottoman Government to respect *status quo* and arrangements made with His Majesty's Government, but he was not aware of occupation of Bubiyan Island, though he knew that troops had been sent to Um-Kasr. He desired to inform me confidentially that real motive of these proceedings was anxiety to keep *debonche* for Baghdad Railway under their own protection, as difficulties were raised about extending it to Koweit. He believed that if English syndicate decided to participate in this great enterprise, nothing more would be heard of such incidents."

The Foreign Office then took into consideration the whole question, and the following memorandum of the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 21st March 1902, should be read as showing the trend of the policy which the Foreign Office wished to pursue:—

"The situation at Koweit is becoming more and more embarrassing and the time has come for looking it on the face.

We have saddled ourselves with an impossible client in the form of the Sheikh. He is apparently an untrustworthy savage. No one knows where his possessions begin and end, and our obligations towards him are as ill-defined as the boundaries of his principality.

We have distinctly announced that he does not enjoy British "protection"; on the other hand, we once made him a present of 1,000*l.*, and promised him our "good offices," whatever that may mean. When we made this promise we were, I feel no doubt, thinking of Koweit proper, if there is such a thing, and not of Bubiyan or other outskirts over which the Sheikh has rights of one sort or another. We have up to the present sheltered ourselves not unsuccessfully, during our discussion which the Turks on the one side and Foreign Governments on the other, behind the plausible announcement that we desired to maintain the *status quo* in regard to Koweit. But I doubt whether any one really knows what the *status quo* is. We have, at any rate in my opinion, no right to tell the Turks that they may not move troops for the purpose of putting down a rebellion in the Nejd region, or that they must not look for a suitable terminus of the Baghdad Railway for fear of disturbing the *status quo*.

If matters are left as they are, we shall involve ourselves in a very unsatisfactory dispute. And we shall, as Admiral Bosanquet has lately pointed out, be obliged to keep the squadron on sentry go at the head of the Gulf in order to maintain the peace.

We might, it seems to me, explain (1) to the Porte, (2) to the Sheikh, and (3) to the Foreign Powers immediately the object of our policy.

I should be inclined to say that our engagements to Koweit do not extend beyond the district adjoining or close to the bay of the name, and to endeavour to obtain the adhesion of the Porte and of the Sheikh to an approximate definition of that district. It may be necessary to reconcile the Sheikh by the payment of another 1,000*l.*, or of an even larger sum.

I would make it clear to the Turks that we do not want to stand in the way of an arrangement under which the terminus of the line might be placed at some spot other than Koweit to their advantage if they can make any thing out of it.



As to the Foreign Powers, I have already explained to most of them that we are not going to oppose the Railway project, provided British Capital receives a share at least equal to that of any other Power in respect of construction, management, and orders for materials, and I have added that while we do not grudge a *débouche* for international commerce in the Gulf, and have nowish to make it into a British lake, we shall resist to the utmost all attempts by other Powers to obtain a foothold on its shores for naval or military purposes.

This, I take it, is the "bed rock" of our policy in the Gulf, and we shall pursue that policy not in virtue of ambiguous understandings with local Chiefs, but as the predominant Power in Southern Persia and in the Gulf: the Power whose commercial interests in those regions far exceed those of other Powers, the Power to whose efforts in the past it is due that the waters of the Gulf are open to the trade of the world, and whose duty it will be in the future to protect the new trade route. It is understood that we have to be reckoned with, whoever builds the railway, and wherever it finds a terminus, because we are that Power, we can regard with difference the local intrigues of any number of Sheikhs and Amirs."

Upon this and after concurrence of the India Office, the Foreign Office despatched on 24th March the telegram which was repeated to the Viceroy on 26th March (See telegram on page 57, paragraph 240 *ante*).

The communication made by Sir N. O'Connor to the Porte was reported in the following:—

Despatch to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 25th March 1902—

"I spoke to the Grand Vizier this afternoon about Koweit in obedience to the instructions contained in Your Lordship's telegram No. 54 of yesterday.

I reminded His Highness of the understanding that had been come to between His Majesty's Government and the Sublime Porte for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the strict and loyal manner in which His Majesty's Government had on their part observed this agreement, and of their right to expect, and even to demand, that the Ottoman Government would on their side be equally loyal and sincere. Instead of this, they had not, I said, ceased, in one way or another, to continually harass and molest the Sheikh, with a view to diminishing his prestige or encroach upon his territories, thus creating a series of irritating discussions between His Majesty's Government and the Sublime Porte, which, I was confident, it was not His Highness's wish to encourage. I felt it was unnecessary, I added, to explain to His Highness how vastly our commercial interests in the Gulf exceeded those of all other foreign Powers, and what a debt was due to England for the way in which she had in the past maintained peace and comparative tranquillity in those waters and undertaken the heavy and responsible task of a maritime police. We had no aggressive intentions against Turkey; our traditional policy in the Gulf, as elsewhere, was to open the road to the trade of the world, but we had interests of a high and important order, both political and commercial, to protect, and we were bound to see that the Sheikh should not be attacked or molested, and we were prepared at the same time to undertake that he does not give the Ottoman Government any just cause of complaint. I went on to say that I thought the Grand Vizier would be well advised in doing all in his power to remove the grounds of complaints on the part of His Majesty's Government in insisting upon the *status quo* not being disturbed in any way, as had unfortunately been the case by the advance of Turkish troops to places where the Sheikh appears to have exercised authority on where, certainly, the Ottoman Government exercised none whatever.

His Highness listened with attention, and said that, in the main, he agreed with my remarks, and considered that the agreement with His Majesty's Government should be faithfully observed. There was an idea that we intended to block all access to the Gulf for the Baghdad Railway; but if this were not so, and they could, as I had told the Minister for Foreign Affairs, count upon our support, under certain conditions, in extending the railway even to Koweit, he was distinctly of opinion that the interest of the Turkish Government was to abide by the Agreement and cease all efforts to disturb the existing order of things. He would consult with some of his colleagues on the matter before submitting a report to His Imperial Majesty, and he hoped to be able to speak to me again on the subject within a few days.

In discussing the question, I was obliged to avoid any reference to the question of the possible equal participation of British Capital in the construction of the Baghdad line, and consequently to avoid using the arguments arising from such participation.

The Sultan has, as far as I know, no knowledge of the negotiations for making the railway an international concern, and he has also shown great sensibility on the subject, and introduced into the Concession a Clause (Article 8) forbidding the transfer of the railway to any other Company.

Were I to mention the subject in such a way as to make it incumbent on the Grand Vizier to report the matter to the Sultan, it might be fatal to the negotiations between the British and German groups for equal participation, besides getting the Germans into more serious difficulties. I could only say that perhaps British capitalists would subscribe towards the construction; but even upon this the Grand Vizier took me up at once, and it would not be advisable to mention this phrase of the question to His Imperial Majesty and he would consider my allusion to the subject as private and confidential."



Appendix J.

(See para. 350)

Notes underlying Foreign Department letter No. 2918-E.A., dated the 7th September 1904, to the Political Resident, Persian Gulf.

It would have been better, I think, if the Secretary of State had been more explicit in his instructions. If Captain Knox is to go to Koweit in a manner not to attract unnecessary attention, he must, it would seem, go there as a visitor, and not as British Political Agent. But it will be difficult to divest of an official appearance the visit, when it comes to be prolonged, of an officer who is First Assistant to the Resident at Bushire, and whose place there will be at once filled up. In any case, Captain Knox's official establishment and way of life would necessarily be very unpretentious at first in Koweit, and the only formalities which might be omitted appear to be his notifying to the Sheikh the nature of his appointment and his flying of the British flag at his residence. On these points I think that the Resident and Captain Knox may reasonably expect instructions. Is he to conceal from the Sheikh the reason of his going to Koweit? This can hardly be intended, and would not be workable for long; but if he does inform Mubarak of the capacity in which he has come, the news of the posting of a Political Agent to Koweit will soon reach the ears of the Turks. In that case it serves little purpose, and looks rather undignified if the Political Agent refrains from hoisting the flag.

1-8-04.

S. M. FRASER.

* * * * *

By the last mail we received a paper showing that, on receipt of our telegram of 4th July, Secretary of State addressed the Foreign Secretary to know if we were correct in detaining the Political Agent, and it is only now that Secretary of State has been able to tell us that it was not contemplated that the Political Agent should be detained. Major Cox also recommends that Captain Knox should start at once; so, with Your Excellency's permission, the telegram may issue as slightly amended.

* Page 6 of notes in Secret E., July 1904, Nos. 620-659. As to the flag, Lord Curzon held that whoever went there should fly it,* but we need not say anything about this at present.

If there is any difficulty, Major Cox will refer the point.

Captain Trevor may, as already arranged, proceed to Bushire forthwith, and I will suggest another man for Bunder Abbas. We may have to go outside the Department.

Instructions to Captain Knox have also to be drafted. We cannot say much more than that it will be his duty to maintain close and friendly relations with Sheikh Mubarak, and to safeguard the interests of British trade and traders at Koweit and in the adjacent tracts of Arabia, while maintaining a vigilant watch over the proceedings of the Turks on the boundaries of Koweit territories. He should at once report all matters tending to show any attempt on the part of the Turks or any other Power to interfere with or disturb the existing *status quo*, or anything which would lead to a belief that any other Powers have designs on, or in connection with possible harbours within or without Koweit territory. Special regard in this respect

* Pro. No. 200 in Secret E., March 1904, Nos. 200-201.

should be paid to Khor Abdulla and the waters round Bubiyan Island† and Um Kasr, but he should be careful not to display undue apprehension or uneasiness on this point, or, in default of definite instructions, to interfere actively in matters affecting these places, though any attempt on the part of the Turks or others acting

† Page 1 of notes in Secret E., March 1904, Nos. 200-201.

from Turkish territory to encroach beyond the limits laid down by His Majesty's Government, Hejiji and Subbi, should be forthwith reported.

He should also endeavour to ascertain if these places really represent the bounds of Sheikh Mubarak's effective occupation at present.

2-8-04.

L. W. DANE.

Instructions to Captain Knox may be drafted on the lines proposed by the Secretary, and I will examine them when drafted.

Captain Trevor should be ordered to Bushire at once.

2-8-04.

A[MPHILL].

* * * * *

The instructions to the Political Agent would be incomplete without some mention of the burning question of the day in Koweit, namely, the struggle in Nejd between Ibn Saoud and Ibn Rashid, and the allied matter of the importation of arms. I would, therefore, add the following to the draft:—

"He should also endeavour to secure early and accurate information regarding the struggle between the Ibn Rashid and Ibn Saoud families for the supremacy of Nejd. The policy of the Government of India is to exclude Turkish influence in Nejd as far as possible, and to regard the proceedings of Ibn Saoud with a friendly eye, as, if he recovers power, he may be useful to



us in connection with the Baghdad Railway, while he represents a family which is non-Turkish and with which they have had treaty relations, whereas Ibn Rashid is now a Turkish nominee. At the same time no assistance is to be given him, and our object is to maintain the independence of Nejd so far as this can be secured without direct interference, and to leave the two families to fight it out. In advising the Sheikh of Koweit as to the attitude which he ought to observe towards this question, you will, therefore, dissuade him from taking any overt action likely to be construed by the Turkish Government into direct interference with the affairs of Nejd (or from participating in any insurrectionary movement). Such advice will be based upon the understanding that the good offices of His Majesty's Government can be extended to him only if he refrains from any such aggression, and is guided by their advice.

Omit as we do not admit that Nejd is Turkish.

L. W. DANE.

With regard to the importation of arms, pending further instructions, you will neither authorise nor forbid Sheikh Mubarak to continue the trade which already exists. You will, however, look into the matter and ascertain the nature and extent of the traffic, as also whether arms are being especially imported through Koweit for Ibn Saoud."

10-8-04.

S. M. FRASER.

Mr. Fraser's proposed paragraphs on Nejd and the arms traffic as altered by me may also, I think, be safely added to the letter of instructions.

11-8-04.

L. W. DANE.

I cannot commit myself to the very definite and uncompromising policy laid down in the letter to the Resident without knowing on what authority it is based. Please refer me to the papers in which Lord Curzon and His Majesty's Government agreed upon such a policy, and put up the despatch of the 24th March, which seems to be essential to a consideration of this case.

12-8-04.

A[MPHILL].

The main portions of the files to Koweit* affairs and the establishment of a post office† there have been recorded, and the case is resubmitted with the following précis bearing on the points touched on in the draft letter and in the suggested

* Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

† Secret E., July 11-04, Nos. 620-659.

addition by Deputy Secretary.

1. Pro. No. 286, Secret E., March 1902, Nos. 127-357.

Also see Pro. No. 57, Secret E., March 1901, Nos. 57-68.

§ Pro. Nos. 281 and 307, Secret E., October 1901, Nos. 184-315.

¶ Pro. No. 271, *Ibid.*

* Pro. No. 276, Secret E., October 1901, Nos. 184-315, and Pro. No. 476, Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 307-509.

2. The précis‡ prepared in the India Office recites the main substance of the Koweit case up to the close of September 1901.

The Turkish Government have agreed § to the mutual maintenance of the *status quo*, but have been informed that "His Majesty's Government" though willing to respect the *status quo* would not allow interference with Koweit, and that encroachments¶ thereon would be prevented by force if necessary.

In December 1901 the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was instructed ** to convey to the Sheikh the purport of a telegram ** from the Secretary of State in which it was stipulated that His Majesty's Government were prepared to support him and would not tolerate an attack by Turkish troops or ships on Koweit should he continue to observe his engagements with us.

Again, in October 1902, in connection with a request from the Sheikh for arms which was

not met, the Secretary of State approved †† of his being informed that if he complied with the injunctions conveyed to him in December 1901, His Majesty's Government would charge themselves with the defence of Koweit district, provided it was clearly defined †† as the district adjoining or close to the Bay of Koweit.

3. As regards foreign powers, Lord Lansdowne †† noted in March 1902 that he had informed most of them * * * "that while we do not grudge a 'débouché' for international commerce in the Gulf, and have no wish to make it into a British lake, we shall resist to the utmost all attempts by other powers to obtain a foothold on its shores for naval or military purposes."

4. The question of the importance of the shores of the mainland of Bubiyan island was noticed in paragraph 5 of the marginally cited despatch, §§ while in paragraph 7 of the same it was recommended that the Porte be informed that His Majesty's Government regarded Bubiyan island as belonging to the Sheikh, and that, unless the Turkish force is withdrawn, they would be constrained to support him in establishing a post on the northern shore to balance the Turkish posts at Um Kasr and Al Geit.

§§ Pro. No. 25, Secret E., dated 4th February 1904, Pro. No. 200, Secret E., March 1904, Nos. 200-301.

¶ Pro. No. 467, Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 307-509.

¶ Pro. No. 25, Secret E., dated 4th February 1904, Pro. No. 200, Secret E., March 1904, Nos. 200-301.

¶ Pro. No. 25, Secret E., dated 4th February 1904, Pro. No. 200, Secret E., March 1904, Nos. 200-301.



5. With regard to Hejeje and Subieh, the Political Resident, Persian Gulf, explained * that Hejeje was on the *Koweit side of Khor Subbiya*.
* Pro. No. 338, Secret E., July 1902, Nos. 207-209.
† Pro. No. 350, *ibid.*
The Government of India informed the Secretary of State † in March 1902 "Sheikh has been advised not to actively oppose Turks if they advance to Hejeje, which is practically same place as Subieh, but to leave the settlement of the question of his frontier with us." They further considered that the advance of the Turks was an unquestionable violation of the *status quo* since they had never before been in places then being occupied.

They subsequently asked the definite question: ‡ "Are we to resist Turkish advance on Koweit side of Khor Subieh?" and received the reply §—"Practically His Majesty's Government would resist Turkish advance on Koweit side of 'Subbiya'."

Again, by letter, the Foreign Office, London, clearly ¶ declared "that, as a question of practical politics, His Majesty's Government would resist a Turkish advance on the Koweit side of Subbiya."

It may also be noted that it was in connection with the reported despatch of Turkish troops to Subbiya and Kasima that Sir N. O'Connor ¶ informed the Turkish Foreign Minister that if such encroachments continued he would be obliged to advise His Majesty's Government to prevent it by force if necessary. His action was approved ** by the Foreign Office.

It may, therefore, be assumed that His Majesty's Government would be glad to receive early intimation of any advance on the above-named places.

6. It was in September 1902 †† that the Secretary of State directed that, in connection with the renewal of hostilities between Ibn Rashid and Abdul Aziz-bin-Saoud, the Sheikh of Koweit should be warned against encouraging any action likely to involve him in difficulties with Nejd or with Turkish Government. Lord Curzon was in November 1903 asked †† personally to point out to the Sheikh the difficulty of effectually protecting him if he countenanced or joined in attacks on neighbouring tribes.

‡‡ End of paragraph 12 of despatch No. 196, Secret E., dated 17th December 1903.
§§ Pro. No. 119, Secret E., February 1904, Nos. 83-127.
¶¶ Pro. Nos. 287, 292, 293, 314, 316 and 317, Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.
This was done and the Sheikh §§ promised implicit compliance with His Excellency's advice. With respect to the insurrectionary actions of Sadun Pasha in Turkish territory the Sheikh was again ¶¶ advised not to involve himself if he desired the good offices of His Majesty's Government.

In April 1904 Lord Curzon suggested ¶¶ that the Turks be warned against direct interference in affairs of Nejd, and this led to the receipt of the telegram, dated the 25th May 1904, *** from the Secretary of State pointing out the undesirability of pressing the Turks to desist from helping the Amir Ibn Rashid, but suggesting that if they persisted in doing so it might be expedient to reconsider the question of appointing a Resident at Koweit. The reply ††† sent to this message summarised the views of the Government of India in the matter.

It was in July 1903 that Lord Curzon ††† expressed the opinion that the appointment of a British officer at Koweit would (a) afford substantial evidence of our intention to preserve and utilise the privileges we already enjoy; (b) enable us to acquire more reliable information as to the true position in the interior of Arabia, where difficult questions may easily arise out of a condition of tribal politics; (c) give us better opportunities for watching the proceedings of the Turks on the border of Koweit territory; and (d) strengthen our right to exert a controlling voice in the ultimate destination of the Baghdad Railway.

7. In March 1904 the Secretary of State was specially addressed §§§ on the subject of the political situation in the interior of Arabia when it was explained "that it may shortly be incumbent on us to take a more lively interest in the affairs of Central Arabia," and that if the representative of the Wahabi family succeeded in establishing and extending his ascendancy "it may be desirable again to enter into relations with our old ally."



8. As to the arms traffic with Koweit the question was, dealt with in a special despatch,* but owing to the action of the Turks it has been decided † to defer for the present the introduction of measures for the prevention of the importation of arms at Koweit. Prior to this the Political Resident, Persian Gulf, was informed ‡ that the deputation of the Assistant Surgeon might enable the furnishing of more complete and systematic information regarding the suspected traffic in arms at Koweit.

* No. 76, Secret E., dated 31st March 1904; Pro. No. 60, Secret E., May 1904, Nos. 43-60.

† Pro. No. 361 and 368 (H), Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 296-373.

‡ Pro. No. 340, *ibid.*

C. O'H. T.,—24-8-04.

C. H. C.,—24-8-04

24-8-04.

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25-8-04.

The sentence in Mr. Fraser's proposed addition§ to the draft instructions to Captain Knox to which I particularly object is the following:—

"The policy of the Government of India is to exclude Turkish influence in Nejd as far as possible, and to regard the proceedings of Ibn Saoud with friendly eye, as, if he recovers power, etc., etc."

This statement is not borne out by the authorities quoted and represents rather the wishes of the Foreign Department than the policy of His Majesty's Government.

It might well lead a young officer, like Captain Knox, to take a more active line than His Majesty's Government intend and it might do harm if it leaked out at Koweit.

The authority given for the statement that it is our policy "to exclude Turkish influence in Nejd" is a telegram in which Lord Curzon said, "I would suggest that the Turks might again be warned against direct interference in affairs of Nejd, or it may be necessary for His Majesty's Government to take measures in those regions in order to protect British interests."

I cannot see that these words justify the statement suggested by Mr. Fraser. No doubt we wish to exclude Turkish influence from Nejd, but to tell a young officer that this is our policy will have the effect of leading him to believe that we mean to take active steps to enforce our wishes. So far from this being the case, Sir N. O'Connor strongly objected to pressing the Turks to desist from helping the Amir of Nejd.

Again the only authority given for the statement that it is our policy "to regard the proceedings of Ibn Saoud with a friendly eye" is the Foreign Secretary's note of 18th May 1904 (at page 12 of Proceedings, Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 237-373). That note says that our policy as stated in Lord Curzon's telegram of 31st July 1903 and in a despatch** of 24th March 1904, is to regard the proceedings of

¶ Pro. No. 623, Secret E., July 1904, Nos. 620-659.

** Pro. No. 215, June 1904, Nos. 207-218.

Ibn Saoud with a friendly eye. But the telegram in question merely enumerates the advantages of having a British officer at Koweit and does not contain a word of reference to Ibn Saoud even indirectly. The despatch states that if Ibn Saoud succeeds in establishing his ascendancy "it may be desirable again to enter into relations with our old ally."

It seems to me that, when the Foreign Secretary wrote his note of 18th May 1904, his thoughts owed their parentage rather to his own wishes than to the recorded papers.

On the other hand, we have a telegram†† from the Secretary of State, dated 8th February 1904, saying that "no steps should be taken to enter into closer relations with Nejd," and Sir N. O'Connor's view‡‡ that he ought not to appear as a distinct partisan of Bin Saoud and that Bin Saoud's success is of doubtful advantage to us and might even be dangerous to our interests.

As to this His Majesty's Government do not appear to have pronounced any decision as yet.

If there is to be any addition to the draft instructions, such as that proposed by Mr. Fraser, it must be in strict accordance with the policy actually laid down by His Majesty's Government and must not go beyond it.



It should be based on—

* Pro. No. 211, Secret E., June 1904, Nos. 207-213.

(1) The Secretary of State's telegram* of 8th February 1904 against entering into closer relations with Nejd.

† Pro. No. 217, Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

(2) The Foreign Office letter† to Sir N. O'Connor of 24th February 1904 with reference to our understanding with the Turks that we would discourage Sheikh Mubarak while the Turks were to restrain the Amir.

‡ Pro. No. 267, Secret E., August 1904, Nos. 286-373.

(3) The letter‡ of 10th May 1904 to the same effect.

§ Pro. No. 215, Secret E., June 1904, Nos. 207-213.

(4) The despatch§ of 24th March 1904.

There will be no difficulty about prescribing a more active policy hereafter, if Lord Curzon should decide on it, with the approval of His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Fraser's proposed addition should be re-drafted in accordance with these instructions.

29-8-04.

A[MPHILL].



